

# THE EASTERN ANTHROPOLOGIST

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# THE EASTERN ANTHROPOLOGIST

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

Dr. T. B. Naik, M.A., Ph.D., Director, Tribal Research Institute, Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, has sent us a communication, which we print below :

"Earlier I had put before you (Editorial, *Bulletin of the T.R.I.*, Vol. 1. No. 3) my ideas as to who should be called a tribe and it would not be out of place to repeat what I said there :

The very first thing that one would ask is what is a tribe. The tribes that are recognised by the States and the Central Governments of India are those which have been scheduled by the President's Scheduled Tribes Order, 1950. But there are every year applications from a number of other communities which want to be included in the schedule (just as hundreds of castes represented to the Backward Classes Commission that they should be declared backward). Now what exactly are the criteria for considering a community, a tribe ? What are the indices of tribal life ? Living in forests ? The Dublas (of Surat district, Bombay State) do not live in forests. They live in the very fertile plains in the midst of advanced communities like the Banias, the Brahmins and the Parsis. Nevertheless they are included in the Schedule. On the other hand, the Pankas are found in the jungles living with the Marias near Chitrakot and Kutumsar in Bastar. But they are not included in the said list.

'Tribal social structure, totemic clans etc., you will say, should be laid down as an index. But even here there is some confusion. The 'Gonds' are a big tribal group but the Ahirs who form another very important community of Madhya Pradesh with a population of 30 lakhs and who are more or less like the Gonds in their social structure, are not included in the list.

'Primitive religion? But you do not know what is primitive religion in India, there being a continuum from the most abstruse philosophy to the tribal gods and superstitious beliefs in the religion of most of the advanced communities of India. This index being very fluid and not exact will not do, I am afraid.

'But that is not all. What happens to persons who belong to a tribal community but who get educated and live and work in urban areas? The tribal community have produced ministers, Government officers, clerks, patwaries, mill hands and mine workers as other communities have. (There are thousands of such persons who cannot be considered as tribals. They say they have to be and the Governments and others refute their claims. There are reasons for this in which we need not go here.)'

After writing that, we, in this Institute tried to arrive at a proper definition of a "tribe". For this, we put in a lot of thought, discussed the pros and cons of various criteria among ourselves and arrived at certain tentative conclusions, which are given below:

1. A tribe to be a "tribe" should have the least functional interdependence within the community. (The Hindu caste system is an example of high inter-dependence.)
2. It should be economically backward, which means that
  - (i) the full import of monetary economics is not understood by its members;
  - (ii) there are primitive means of exploiting natural resources;
  - (iii) the tribe's economy is in an undeveloped stage;
  - (iv) and it has multifarious economic pursuits.
3. There should be a comparative geographical isolation of the people with others.
4. Culturally the people to be a "tribe" should have a common dialect though it may be subject to regional variations.
5. A tribe to be a "tribe" should be politically organised and its community Panchayat should be an influential institution.
6. The "tribe's" members have the least desire to change. They have a sort of psychological conservatism to stick to their old customs.
7. The "tribe" should have customary laws, and its members might be suffering because of these customary laws in the Law courts.

A community to be a "tribe" must have all these. It might be undergoing acculturation, whose degree will also have to be found out in the context of their customs, gods, language, etc. A very high degree of acculturation will automatically debar it from being a "tribe".

Please let us know your opinion on these points and suggest additions and alterations wherever you think fit."

For some time past, and since the Backward Classes Commission had reported, anthropologists are anxious to have standard definitions of 'caste', 'tribe', 'backward' and many such terms in frequent use, and Dr. Naik's communication focusses the need for such standard connotations, if we can evolve them. I have given several definitions in my books, but what the anthropologists can understand by implication, may not be understood by others, while policy decisions are

made by the latter. I would, therefore, restate my position, and in this case, by giving a definition, which may find acceptance by a larger number of anthropologists and others interested in tribal and social welfare.

A tribe is a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous, with no specialisation of functions, ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognising social distance with other tribes or castes, without any social obloquy attaching to them, as it does in the caste structure, following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, illiberal of naturalisation of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of a homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration.

A tribe may be 'scheduled' or may not be—may be acculturated partly or wholly. If the economic condition and the degree of acculturation are such that they have already been levelled up there is no sense in giving them the scheduled status, as for example the tribes of Dudhi, Mirzapur district, or the Raj Gonds of Sarguja. Similarly, a part of the tribe may be backward, and a part may not be, and amelioratory measures to be given should be decided on merit. A tribe may be converted to Christianity, but so long as the tribe maintains its homogeneity, consciousness of kind and territorial integrity, it still remains a tribe. Members of a tribe, if through education and opportunities improve their lot, and even stay away from their tribal moorings, temporarily or permanently, they still belong to the tribe, though privileges and opportunities need not be guaranteed to every member of the tribe, or to every section of the tribe, backward or levelled up. Tribal membership, if it connotes sharing of the ethos and aspirations of the tribe, should entitle a person to the privileges available to the tribe, by right of its scheduled status. Where a tribe is split up into several sections, some more advanced than others, and intermarriage and intra-tribal relationships are restricted, the advanced sections should not demand the privileges, which are meant for backwardness. The Santhals of Santhal Parganas have their territorial affiliation and are conscious of their homogeneity and even of ethnic origin, but the tea garden coolies or the agricultural population in Dinajpur, those who were originally from Santhal Parganas, no longer feel the same way and should not be treated as such.

The tests that we have indicated above can be easily applied, and a new list of tribes can be drawn up, which, we are sure, will reduce the number of tribes needing care and levelling up.

A similar list can be drawn up of castes requiring all-out efforts to level them up, and those who are advanced, economically and socially, although, for traditional reasons, they have been condemned as inferior, depressed, exterior or untouchable. In the case of castes, the tests should be (1) extent of education, (2) economic security,

(3) property, and (4) status in the caste hierarchy in the area they inhabit. This will rule out omnibus classification into backward castes, of castes who are advanced, have greater economic security through agriculture, industry or handicrafts, and who own no social incompetence.

Equality of opportunity and equal rights and freedom of occupational choice, are more to be desired than scheduling social groups into stigmatised sections of our population, as is being done. For special treatment of castes, the test should be if the caste has been denied in the past rights and opportunities, and such castes are there who need care and measures for uplift. The Koltas of Jaunsar-Bawar were the hewers of wood and drawers of water, rights were denied to them, land they could not own, gold ornaments they were prevented from putting on, and chronic indebtedness reduced them to a serfdom, which has been perpetuated for generations. Such castes need special care, but a caste which refuses to get their children educated, yet owns property and has worked out economic security of a kind, should not be treated as needing the special privileges earmarked for the scheduled section. Illiteracy should not be regarded as a test of backwardness if the members of a caste deliberately refuse to have education for their children, even though facilities exist and are provided for by the Government.

Backwardness is a relative term, and every caste or community is more or less backward compared to other castes or communities. Universalisation of social services, education and medical aid, equalisation of opportunities for levelling up and freedom of choice of occupations, which a Welfare State must aim at, would reduce dependence and also the need for special treatment.

The conclusions arrived at by Dr. Naik and his Institute do not run counter to much that I have included in my definition of tribe. I have not included the economic argument for the reason that 'economically backward' and 'failure to understand the full import of monetary economics' (2. i) will bring the tribes and many of the castes in the same category. Undeveloped (2. iii) stage of economy does not improve the situation. Otherwise Dr. Naik's relevant points, 2. ii, 2. iv, 3, 4, 5, 6, are covered by my definition. Only, mine is a little more categorical. I have not accepted 7, as it is immaterial if the tribe follows customary laws or not, for in an age of social change, the zero point is indeed difficult to specify.

D. N. M.

DAVID G. MANDELBAUM

Rites performed for the dead generally have important effects for the living. A funeral ceremony is personal in its focus and is societal in its consequences. The people of every society have a pattern for dealing with the death of their fellows. No matter how unprepared an individual may be for the fact of a particular death, the group must always have some plan of action in the event of death.

Certain things must be done after a death, whether it occurs in a very simple or in a highly complex society. The corpse must be disposed of; those who are bereaved—who are personally shocked and socially disoriented—must be helped to reorient themselves; the whole group must have a known way of readjustment after the loss of one of its members. These things "must" be done in the sense that they *are* done. When people find that they have no set pattern for dealing with death—as may occur in newly coalesced groups—or when they discover that the former pattern is no longer a feasible one, they tend quickly to establish some clear plan for coping with the occasion of death.

These common purposes of funeral rites are accomplished in a great variety of ways among the different cultures of the world. Death ceremonies often entail central motifs of a culture; their performance usually helps to bolster the solidarity of the social group. We shall describe one funeral ceremony, that of the Kota of South India, in some detail, as an example of rites with complex content and multiple functions. Funeral rites include both the ritual performed immediately after the death of a person and also those rites of mourning and commemoration which, in many societies, are performed weeks or months after the death. In the Kota case, our interest is mainly in the second funeral, the commemorative ceremony staged once a year in a village for all those who have died in the preceding year.

We shall more briefly examine death rites of other cultures in order to illustrate some general concepts concerning funeral practices. From two American Indian societies come examples showing the possible range in emphasis of death ceremonies. In the one, the Cocopa, the mourning ceremony is the great event of tribal life and one in which tribal wealth—a very meagre wealth and therefore all the more precious—is extravagantly expended. In the other society, that of the Hopi, a funeral ceremony is played down and hurried over. From the Hebridean island of Barra, we have an example of funeral rites conducted according to the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church, but performed also with significant local characteristics.

How funeral rites may reflect psychological ambivalence is indicated in the example of the Apache death observances. An analysis of a particular funeral in a town in Java shows that, under certain circumstances, the performance of a funeral ceremony may rouse social conflict. Discussion of these examples can serve as an introduction to the study of funeral ceremonies, one of the universals of human social experience.

The Kotas are a people who live in seven small villages which are interspersed among the villages of their neighbors on the high Nilgiri plateau in South India. The height and inaccessibility of the plateau formerly isolated the tribal peoples who lived on it from the main currents of Indian civilization.

That isolation was broken about the middle of the nineteenth century, and since then many other peoples, English and Indian, have come to enjoy the cool heights or to work there. As a result of these contacts, the cultures of the indigenous Nilgiri folk have been changed. In many ways, the Kotas are now much like typical villagers of low caste in the surrounding plains, but their funeral rites—though altered in recent generations—still follow much of the ancient form.

The Kotas observe two funeral ceremonies; the first, called the "Green Funeral", takes place shortly after a death and it is then that the body is cremated. The second, called the "Dry Funeral", is held once a year (or once in two years) for all the deaths that have occurred since the last Dry Funeral was celebrated. (Mandelbaum, 1954) The terms are an analogy to a cut plant. At the first funeral the loss is green and fresh in the mind; at the second it is dried out, sere.

At the first funeral, a bit of skull bone is taken from the ashes of the pyre and reverently cached away until the second funeral. The Dry Funeral extends over eleven days and comes to a climax when each relic from the year's deaths is carried off to the cremation ground and, after complex ritual acts, the relics are re-cremated. The first funeral is attended by the close relatives and friends of the deceased. The second funeral is a grand occasion, attended by people from all the Kota villages and by non-Kotas as well.

Why is there a second funeral—why does not the first suffice? The Kotas give two reasons, one religious, the other social.

The religious reason is that the spirit of the dead person does not finally depart for the "Motherland," the Kota afterworld, until the second funeral is completed. Only then is the spirit purified enough to reach God. The social reason is that the dead man continues to have certain attributes of social personality until his second funeral.

Most importantly, a widow is still her late husband's wife up to the conclusion of the Dry Funeral. If she becomes pregnant after his physical death but before his second funeral, the child is his, shares in his name, clan, and property. In this society, biological paternity is considerably less important than sociological paternity. Hence the faithful widow of a man who has died without a son will conscientiously try to become pregnant before the end of his Dry Funeral. The dead man's right to a child of her womb ceases only after her first menstrual period following the second funeral.

In a way, the Kotas endow society rather than nature with the last word on whether a man has really died. The process, to be sure, begins with his physical demise, but it is not until people perform a Dry Funeral for him that his spirit departs from earth and his social status is finally deleted.

The emphasis of the funeral ritual is much more on speeding the departure of the spirit from this world than it is on the "Motherland" beyond. Kotas are not much interested in the other world and have only sketchy ideas about it. They are quite precise about the purification which the spirit and the surviving kin must undergo in order that the spirit may depart for good.

Among the Kotas, as among many of the peoples of India, contact with death is considered to be deeply polluting. A polluted person is debarred from normal social relations until he has been purified by proper and protracted ritual. The spirit of the dead person, too, is polluted in leaving the body, and the dual funeral rites purify the spirit so that it may take up proper relations in the afterworld.

Between the time of the body's last breath and the climactic end of the Dry Funeral, the lingering spirit is dangerous for men, especially for the deceased's closest kin. The climax comes when a pot is smashed, at the proper ritual juncture, in the cremation ground beyond the village. At that signal all who have attended the ceremony—that is to say, most of the villagers and many visitors—run back to the village without looking behind them. The living go one way, the dead another. The rite is always successful, the dead never return to plague the living as occurs in some societies. This says much about Kota self-confidence and cultural assurance.

The Dry Funeral extends over eleven days and involves villagers and visitors in a series of ceremonial roles which they play out in a fixed sequence, like the acts of a play. And any great ceremony is indeed like a dramatic performance. It has well defined roles and acts because it must be performed over and again, in similar ways, by different players.

There are two broad categories of roles, those of the kinsmen of the dead person and those of his fellows in the community. His kin are the bereaved who are being purified and restored to society; his

kith—fellow villagers and other Kotas—help restore the bereaved and help speed the spirit on its way.

On the first morning of the Dry Funeral, a band of musicians gathers and plays a lament. With the opening notes of the funeral tune, it becomes clearly apparent, even to a stranger, which villagers have lost a relative during the past year. Bereaved women stop in their tracks. A rush of sorrow suffuses them; they sit down where they are, cover their heads with their shoulder cloths, wail and sob through much of that day and the next. Men of a bereaved household have much to do in preparation for the ceremony, and do not drop everything to mourn aloud as do the bereaved women. But even they stop from time to time to weep.

Most grief-stricken of all are widows and widowers. They must observe the most stringent mourning taboos and undergo the most extensive purificatory ritual. Much of the ritual of the funerals revolves about them. The siblings and children of a dead person have important, but less extensive, roles to play in the ceremony. Interestingly, the parents of a dead person have no formal part in the funeral. They may be as personally grief-stricken as bereaved parents can be in any society, but the cultural plan of the ritual does not make special provision of them. They may not even go through the formal gestures and symbols of mourning.

Leading roles in the category of participants who are not bereaved kinsmen, are taken by priests. They lead in the ritual, except for certain especially sensitive acts such as setting flame to the funeral pyre. Then a specially chosen boy leads. A boy must lead because he is pure; his youth has preserved him from those defiling experiences which tarnish any man, even a priest. Other ceremonial roles are taken, respectively, by secular officers, fellow villagers, visiting Kota villagers, and by neighboring people who are not Kotas.

The ceremony falls into four main acts. First there is a week during which the year's dead are memorialized one by one. During that week strict mourning taboos are observed by bereaved kinsmen; other villagers dance every night, partly as a distraction for the mourners, partly to show both the viability and the concern of society.

The next act takes place on the day of the second cremation. A procession winds out of the village; in it are men carrying funeral goods to be placed on the pyre. The bit of skull bone is taken out and carried to the cremation ground. There the bone, the goods, the personal ornaments of the widow or widower are placed on the pyre and it is set alight. The bereaved and some of the participants spend the night at the cremation ground.

The third phase of the ceremony begins when the morning star is seen by those who have spent the night at the funeral place. The mood changes abruptly. There is dancing and feasting; widows

and widowers perform rituals in several stages which bring them progressively closer to normal social life. At nightfall the pot is smashed, all run back to the place of life, the village. That night the widows and widowers have sexual relations, preferably with a sibling of the dead spouse, thus symbolizing yet another step back to normal relations.

Finally there are two days of singing and dancing. The village houses are ritually purified. Then the visitors leave and the villagers take up the ordinary round of life again.

By these roles and these prescriptions for action, Kota culture provides a way of answering the question which Kota society and every society must answer—what to do about death? The body is properly removed. The bereaved are successfully brought through their shock and sorrow back to normal status and relations. The villagers duly commemorate the death and turn back to everyday pursuits with a sense of having done the right and proper things about the social loss.

These are the manifest purposes accomplished by the ceremony, the purposes which villagers recognize and can explain. But the Dry Funeral celebration has other functions as well which are not so apparent to the participants, which are more implicit than explicit.

One such function is the reaffirmation of the social order. The role taken by each participant has to do with one or another of the groupings which make up Kota and Nilgiri society. These groupings range from the family, through the kinship circle, to the village, the Kota people, the Nilgiri peoples. There are economic and social obligations entailed in each of the groupings. These reciprocal obligations are remembered, re-enacted, and thus reinforced in the course of the ceremony.

The cohesion of the family is then clearly demonstrated. All in a bereaved household work hard to provide the necessary goods for the pyre and food for the feast. All in the deceased's family stay together in the house during the first week of the Dry Funeral, dressed in old and tattered clothes, hair unkempt, voices low, sadness heavy over all the household.

Kin relationship beyond the family is also reaffirmed during the ceremony. Relatives come to console the bereaved family and contribute to the funeral expenses. Every Kota who considers himself related to the dead person makes a point of attending the Dry Funeral and bowing to the relic of the deceased before it is recremated.

Other social groupings are represented in the ceremony: clan membership is acknowledged and confirmed, village affiliation—both of the dead and of the living—is shown. At certain points, a representative from each of the Kota villages plays a formal part in the ritual, thus reminding the assembly of the unity of all Kotas. There is also

a place in the ceremony for associates of the bereaved families who are not Kotas; representatives of the neighboring peoples attend and, in their proper way, participate. A Kota is thus reminded, in the context of the funeral ceremony, of the parts and personnel of his social order. He can see, demonstrated in action, how its various parts serve him and must be served by him.

Participation in the ceremony has yet another effect on the participants. It gives them a renewed sense of belonging to a social whole, to the entire community of Kotas. The villagers and visitors go in procession, led by music, to clear the cremation ground, build the pyre, prepare the feast, and do other work in preparation for the ceremony. These group activities and the dancing which follows not only bring general enjoyment but enhance feelings of social unison.

There is no inclination to enlarge the intensity or scope of the mourners' grief. The bereaved are given a formal opportunity for complete self-immersion in grief, but there is also an effort to curtail their sorrow, to distract them by pleasing figures of the dance. Funeral dancing is not approved in scriptural Hinduism, and as the Kotas have become more influenced by the practices of high caste Hindu villagers, they have become more uncertain about the propriety of dancing at a funeral.

The ceremony is being changed in this and in other directions, but it is still an occasion when many Kotas work together and together accomplish a religiously proper and personally enjoyable goal, the successful staging of the ceremony. This joint accomplishment bolsters Kota cohesion and sometimes helps smooth over factional rifts.

A third social consequence of enacting the ceremony is that the order of precedence within Kota society is formally repeated and in that manner officially reinforced. Just as a participant gets from the ceremony a sense of the social whole and of the various groupings within the whole, so does he also derive a sense of the proper order in social life. For example, there is a strict order of precedence in the funeral procession, at the feast, and in all phases of the rite. Briefly put, the order is this: all men come before all women; officials and elders before all other men; officials before elders; religious officials before secular officials. Within any category, elders in age come before their juniors.

This same rank order applies in all life situations, as in the serving of an ordinary meal. But at great occasions like the second funeral, the whole assembly of Kotas formally, publicly, and impressively rehearses the proper precedence among the constituent parts of society.

Another social consequence which flows from performing the Dry Funeral is the completion of the proper order of a person's career.

Every social transition is marked by some appropriate ritual. Hence the final step should also be celebrated appropriately by a person's kin and fellows. "A proper progress through life means a funeral." This comment by Raymond Firth on the people of the Polynesian island of Tikopia applies to the Kotas as well. "The death of every person must be followed by a reaffirmation of the social character of human existence." (Firth, 1951, p. 64)

The Dry Funeral performance also has personal, psychological meanings for individual men and women. A Kota woman whose husband has died, reacts in ways which are the common, human manifestations of grief. She appears shocked and disoriented by her loss; she can think of nothing but her grief, she is bewildered, she withdraws. Her keening is culturally stereotyped and much of her specific behavior as a mourning widow is prescribed by the cultural requirements for the role of new widow, but in seeing her, we understand that there is also personal sorrow and genuine disorientation in her behavior.

For this widow, as well as for other bereaved persons, the performance of the Dry Funeral effectively assuages grief and provides personal reorientation. After the first outburst of grieving at the Green Funeral, there is a period of months of relative quietude. The second funeral provides an occasion for summoning up a person's latent grief, for expressing it, and then for terminating it. In the eleven days of the ceremony there is ample opportunity for venting one's sorrow. Perhaps for that reason the grief is more easily and finally dispersed after the rite. The several phases of the ceremony bring the bereaved back to normal status in gradual and socially approved states. (cf. Firth, 1951, p. 63)

As in any major ceremony, incidental consequences ensue. Young men find occasion then to look over girls from various villages. A mature man who has prospered, may take the occasion to demonstrate his achievements by providing lavish funeral goods, perhaps for a distant relative. One man, whose main personal victories came from his wide knowledge of ritual, found special satisfaction in playing a director's role in guiding the complex rites of the Dry Funeral. Such personal purposes, no less than the larger societal needs, are served by the celebration of the Dry Funeral.

## II

Comparable purposes, both personal and social, are accomplished by the performance of death ceremonies in other societies. But there are great variations in the manner of bringing about such integrative results. As we examine the range of variation we find that among some peoples, funeral ceremonies are great public events; in other

societies they are conducted swiftly, quietly, almost furtively. The whole of a social order may be represented at the funeral, or only a small section of it.

Two American Indian tribes of the Southwest, the Cocopa and the Hopi, respectively exemplify extremes of emphasis and of a de-emphasis, in the observance of funeral rites. Among the Cocopa, death ceremonies are the major events of tribal life; among the Hopi, they are brief and hurried affairs.

The Cocopa, who lived mainly along what is now the Arizona-Sonora border, practised some agriculture, but depended largely on hunting and gathering. Theirs was a relatively simple culture; they possessed few goods, they conducted few ceremonies. (Kelly, 1949) The whole tribe, in the late nineteenth century, consisted of some twelve hundred people, scattered in small settlements. People from several settlements might come together for a harvest fiesta, but many more would gather for the occasion of a mourning ceremony. The death ceremonies were the principal religious and social events of the tribe.

Soon after a death, the mourning members of the family became transported into an ecstasy of violent grief behavior. They cried, wailed, and screamed from the time of the death, without much interruption for twenty-four hours or more until the body was cremated. The cremation ritual was directed mainly at inducing the spirit of the dead person to go on to the afterworld. To help persuade the spirit to depart, clothes, food, and equipment were destroyed so that the spirit could have these things in the hereafter.

Some time after the cremation, and with purposes analogous to those of the Kota second funeral, a Cocopa family would give a mourning ceremony to commemorate its dead. Then a large part of the tribe would gather, there would be speeches and lamentations for the dead. At all other times, the names of the dead could not be mentioned; at this mourning ceremony dead relatives were recalled publicly, summoned to mingle with the assembled tribesmen, and impersonated by men and women dressed in ceremonial costumes to resemble specific deceased persons. Presents were given to visitors and valuable goods, including a ceremonial house and the ceremonial costumes, were burned for the benefit of the spirits. Kelly gives his impression that ". . . this action symbolized a desire to be free of the dead, and that the ceremony served, in part, to bring lurking spirits into the open, and, in dramatic fashion, to rid the earth of them by banning them again in the physical form of the costumes worn by the impersonators." (1949, p. 161)

The cremation ritual dealt mainly with the disposal of the body and with helping the bereaved over the initial shock. At the subsequent mourning ceremony, the focus was more on religious and social

integration than on the personal adjustment of the bereaved. Yet this very strengthening of social integration doomed the Cocopa to a relatively sparse level of subsistence. Because funeral rites were the main expression of Cocopa tribal enterprise and because the destruction and lavish consumption of wealth were integral parts of the funeral complex, the Cocopa "were forever barred from the accumulation of capital goods, the development of complex tools and equipment, and the building of elaborate houses, temples, or monuments. They were, in effect, held to a hand-to-mouth existence which was more efficiently pursued by independent families and small political units." (Kelly, 1949, p. 163)

The old tradition of death practices continued in force when Kelly worked among the Cocopa between 1940 and 1947. At that time, not one of the tribe had acquired and kept more wealth than a bare minimum of household goods and a second-hand automobile. No Cocopa had dared inherit anything, money or property, from a dead relative. The one change in this, perhaps indicative of changes to come, was that in a few families a dead relative's automobile was not burned but was traded in for another model.

### III

At the other end of the state of Arizona and at a vastly different level of culture, live the Hopi. They are one of the Pueblo tribes—agriculturalists who follow a highly ritualized, complex way of life. In recent years, automobiles and other appurtenances of Western material culture have become familiar sights in the eleven Hopi villages. Yet the traditional ways of religion, of ceremonialism, of social organization are still followed by many Hopi. Funeral rites continue to be held in the old tradition, and that tradition is one which minimizes the whole event of death and funerals.

The Hopi do not like the idea of death and they are afraid of the newly dead. Their funeral rites are small, private affairs, quickly over and best forgotten. Those who are bereaved may well feel the pain of loss as deeply as do mourners in any society, but they give themselves over to no overt transport of grief of the kind expected of mourners among the Cocopas, Kotas, and in many another society. The Hopi cherish the middle way, they seek to avoid excess of any kind, their most desirable universe is one in which all is measured, deliberate, and under control. Weeping may be unavoidable, but it is not encouraged, for any cause. If one must weep—Hopi parents have told their children—it is best to weep alone, outside the village, where no one can see. (Brandt, 1954, p. 221)

As soon as a death occurs in a family, the women of the household do lament; they cry a bit and speak of their loss. But there is

no formal wailing nor is there a public gathering. The body is quickly prepared for burial and put into its grave as soon as possible. A woman relative washes the head; prayer feathers and a cotton mask are put on the corpse; it is wrapped and carried off straightway by the men of the household.

As with the Kotas and many other peoples of the world, contact with death brings pollution. Before persons who are thus polluted can resume normal relations with men and with the gods, they must divest themselves of the taint. Hence on their return from the burying ground, the members of the household purify themselves ritually. The next morning a male relative of the deceased puts meal and prayer sticks on the new grave, prays for rain—a central good of Hopi life—and asks the spirit not to return to the village. To insure the departure of the departed, the relative symbolically closes the trail back to the village by drawing charcoal lines across it. When he comes back to the bereaved household, all wash their hair, purify themselves in piñon smoke. "They should then try to forget the deceased and continue with life as usual." (Eggan, 1950, pp. 57-58)

The spirit is believed to rise from the grave on the fourth morning and to follow the path to the land of the dead, somewhere in the general area of the Grand Canyon. It then becomes one of the great assembly of supernaturals. With these the Hopi are greatly concerned. The supernatural spirits are continually invoked; they are frequently asked for blessings; they come to the villages on ceremonial occasions. But the spirits are not Hopis; they are a different class of being and Hopi culture provides rules and means for dealing with them. The spirits are depersonalized entities, they do not have the characteristics of deceased friends and relatives. The Hopi go to great lengths to make sure that the dichotomy between the quick and the dead is sharp and clear. Many rites having to do with spirits conclude with a ritual device which breaks off contact between mortals and spirits. (Kennard, 1937, pp. 491-492)

The Hopi are one people who express no desire whatsoever to recall the memory of their deceased, whether for good or ill. Some years ago a visitor to one of the Hopi villages took a picture of a young woman. On a later visit to the village, he learned that the young woman had died, and so he presented the enlarged photograph which he had with him to her mother. The next day the mother begged him to take the picture back, saying that it reminded her too vividly of her bereavement. The anthropologist's footnote to this account adds that "No Pueblo Indian of the older generation wants a picture of a deceased relative." (Titiev, 1944, p. 21) Among the Hopi and other Pueblo peoples, "Fear of the dead and the will to forget them as individuals are extreme, but the dead have to remove from the living, not the living from the dead." (Parsons, 1939, p. 1150) That is,

the mourners do not have to destroy all mementos and property of the deceased; that would be quite contrary to Hopi precepts of balance, moderation, thrift. Property is inherited and distributed in prescribed ways among various classes of heirs.

The emphasis in the funeral ceremony is quite different from other motifs of Hopi practice. Most life cycle and calendrical rites are conducted with very elaborate ceremony, in contrast to the quick and meagre ritual of the funeral occasion. Hopi society is an elaborate structure of interlocking organizations. In most ceremonies, members of different social-religious organizations take part or attend at some stage. But the funeral ceremony is restricted mainly to the immediate household; there is little provision to show the multiple roles which the deceased may have occupied in the social network. The sovereign desire is to dismiss the body and the event. The urge is to dispatch the spirit to another realm where it will not challenge Hopi ideals of good, harmonious, happy existence in *this* world and where, as a being of another and well-known kind, it can be methodically controlled by the ritual apparatus of Hopi culture.

#### IV

Quite a different outlook on death and on life is shown in the funeral rites of the Roman Catholic people of Barra, the southernmost island group in Scotland's Outer Hebrides. Burial rites there, as F. G. Vallee describes them, take place in five stages. Only the close relatives are involved in the first; the total community is included in the last stage. When the final funeral bell tolls every islander participates, in some degree, in the observances of the occasion.

The first act of the sequence begins when it becomes clear that a person is approaching his end. The close relatives rally round to help. It is important to make sure that a priest will be present at the proper time to bestow the last rites—these rites are a most essential element in the “happy death” which the Barra Catholic asks for in his prayers.

Death is not a tabooed subject for conversation. A failing person may well discuss with his friends and relatives the likelihood of his being alive, say, next autumn. Nor is there in this culture any great dread of the departed spirit. “In no case that I knew of was it assumed that the soul of a particular individual went to hell after death, no matter how evil his life in terms of the community *mores*.” (Vallee, 1955, p. 121)

When the death occurs, the next stage of the ceremony is set in train. The news is spread throughout the community of some 2000 people. No group recreation takes place until after the burial; those in the neighborhood abstain from their regular work.

The chief mourner—the man most closely related to the deceased—goes to the public house to buy whiskey and beer for those who will assemble, and to arrange for coffin and shroud. This is the first public act in the ritual sequence; the chief mourner receives condolences from the men at the bar.

As the news spreads, those who have had close social ties with the deceased, gather to pay their respects. Cousins, in-laws, close friends come. They bring supplementary food and refreshments; some of them stay through night, which is the night of the wake. The "watchers" during the night are mostly men. They talk through the night about seamanship, fishing, sheep and similar subjects of male interest. Drinking whiskey and beer is part of the ritual idiom but there is no immoderation in drinking. A few women, mainly those of the household, are present and busy themselves about the kitchen. The men take turns through the night in keeping vigil beside the body. Several times during the night the whole company goes into the death room and all pray.

From Vallee's account of these formalities, it seems reasonable to infer that the wake serves both psychological and social purposes. The assembled kinsmen and friends are solicitous and helpful, giving psychic support to the bereaved. In their presence the mourners can give necessary vent to their grief but are constrained from intense and incapacitating brooding about their loss. The participants at the wake, by their presence, also assure the mourners (and themselves as well) that the bonds of kinship and friendship continue, that the death has not irreparably ruptured the web of social life.

In the afternoon on the day after the wake, the coffin is carried in procession to the chapel. In the funeral procession are the deceased's relatives, friends, and neighbors. Every man is given a turn at helping to bear the coffin, no matter how short the distance it is carried.

The final stage of the ceremony begins with a Requiem Mass on the following morning. Then the coffin is carried, again in procession, to the cemetery. This is a larger procession than on the previous day; people from a wide area attend. At the grave the priest conducts the burial service. After the interment, mourners disperse to kneel and pray at graves of other deceased relatives. Members of the bereaved household return home and are visited by their kinsmen.

The name of the dead person is recalled at High Mass each Sunday for a year in every Catholic congregation on the island. In the dead person's home church his name is formally mentioned in this way for two years after his death.

The people of Barra seem to have a smooth and easy set of patterns for dealing with the event of death. There appears, at least overtly, to be no great fear of the dead, no anxiety about speeding on the departed spirit, and no avoidance of the topic or of the memory of the

deceased. Most men and women participate in some ten to fifteen funerals in their neighborhood every year; death ceremonies for them are normal events. Vallee notes how the sacred and secular elements are blended in the funeral. The occasion is a religious one complete with priest, prayers, holy services. "Yet in the midst of these forms and acts of sanctity, mourners chat easily of ships and sheep, are concerned with ensuring that there is no shortage of liquor and food. Frequent attendance at these rites does more than breed familiarity with death; it intensifies the awareness of belonging to a community." (*Ibid*, p. 128)

The ritual sequence is complex; only the bare outline has been sketched here. It is a clearly known, frequently repeated sequence, hence hundreds can smoothly and spontaneously participate in a funeral. Even the few Protestants on the Island know precisely when to take part and when to withdraw from the rites.

Funerals in Barra differ from those of our previous examples in that they are regulated and led by priests of the Roman Catholic Church—an institution which extends far beyond the given community in space, time, and authority. Catholic ritual prescribes certain funeral rites and Catholic dogma provides certain beliefs about death. But there is also a great deal in any Catholic funeral which is not laid down in the canons of the Church. In Barra, for example, the wake, the whiskey, the procession are important elements of the ceremony, but are not prescribed by the Church.

Among other peoples who are Roman Catholic in religion, a funeral ceremony includes the same prescribed rites but it may also include many different elements of social participation, cultural practice and emotional emphasis. The Church does decree certain requirements for funerals and will not countenance practices which run counter to its theological precepts. But the limits of these requirements are quite broad; within them there is notable variation between, say, a Catholic funeral in Barra and one in Bavaria or in the Philippines. Hence, while funeral rites in Barra appear to be smoothly attuned to social and personal needs, among another people of the same religion the funeral may not allay personal tensions or promote social concord in the same manner as on Barra.

## V

Sometimes the very form of the funeral reflects personal ambivalences which arise from conflicting social and cultural conditions. Thus the Chiricahua and Mescalero Apache Indians of the American southwest show two kinds of formal response to bereavement. Both are broadly similar to those previously mentioned for another southwestern tribe, the Cocopa. On the one side there is vigorous and

public expression of grief by relatives of a deceased ; on the other side there is rigorous effort to banish all trace of the death and all memory of the deceased. There is a period when it is proper for mourners to give vent to their grief and then they do so in quite violent fashion. At other times, the name and memory of a dead person must be expunged from recall and remembrance.

In his analysis of Apache death customs, M. E. Opler notes that "there is the tendency to publicly signify grief and attest to the loss, and an elaborately socialized machinery for banishing that grief and the objects and words which might awake it." (Opler, 1936, p. 92)

These apparently contradictory practices, Opler suggests, are one manifestation of the ambivalence an Apache feels toward his relatives. Throughout his life an Apache is taught to assist and support his relatives, to avenge their wrongs at any cost. He in turn depends on them, and under the economic and social conditions of aboriginal Apache life could not survive without them. But he was also taught to be independent and self-reliant, and this quality too was necessary for successful living in his natural and social environment.

The two demands, for group solidarity and for individual independence, often created conflict within the Apache individual. He generally acceded to the demands of his family group, but there was left in him a residue of resentment and hostility toward them. This hostility was shown in various ways. One was the belief that every Apache who received supernatural power was obliged to pay for this power with the life of a close relative, perhaps one of his children. Since "practically every Apache realized a supernatural experience," a person commonly feared those of his close relatives who were known to have particularly powerful supernatural helpers. (*Ibid*, p. 100)

Hence the two kinds of bereavement reaction, Opler suggests, reflect the personal ambivalence which an Apache felt about his relatives—including his parents, his siblings, and his wife's parents and siblings. The permitted, florid mourning behavior expressed the emotional loss of a loved person on whom one was greatly dependent. The strong cultural directives to obliterate all trace of a deceased may be "the result of repressed and unconscious resentment and dislike of relatives which have their roots in the actual circumstances and events of Apache life." (*Ibid*, p. 107)

The cultural fiat to mourn and then to dismiss the memory of a dead relative evidently made it easier for an Apache to dismiss the fear he had of the relative when he was alive and of his ghost after he was dead. Such overt fear of one's close kin is not commonly manifested among the various peoples of the world.

More usual in human societies is another sort of ambivalence about death and funeral rites. Bronislaw Malinowski depicted the feelings of bereaved survivors in these words : "The emotions are extremely

complex and even contradictory ; the dominant elements, love of the dead and loathing of the corpse, passionate attachment to the personality still lingering about the body and a shuddering fear of the gruesome thing that has been left over, these two elements seem to mingle and play into each other." (1948, p. 30) In the Melanesian funeral rites which he had observed, Malinowski commented, there was shown a desire to maintain the tie with the deceased and the parallel tendency to break the bond. By performing the prescribed religious acts, men can resolve this conflict, counteract "the centrifugal forces of fear, dismay, demoralization," and can reintegrate themselves as a group and reestablish their morale. (*Ibid*, pp. 32-35)

## VI

Yet traditional rites are not always sufficient for the occasion and its stress. An illuminating analysis of a funeral in a small town in Java, shows how in that case the use of the customary funeral ceremony brought on social discord rather than integration, and brought more trouble than solace to the bereaved. (Geertz, 1957) The principal difficulty lay in the fact that the traditional rites, which were suited to the needs of the occasion in an agricultural, village, folk milieu are not as appropriate to the needs of villagers who are transplanted to town life, where economic and political orientations differ from those of the village.

The episode occurred in 1954 when a ten-year-old boy, who was living with his uncle and aunt in one of the crowded neighborhoods of a town in east central Java, suddenly died. The uncle dispatched a telegram to the boy's parents and then sent for a Modin, a Muslim religious official, to conduct the funeral in the customary, traditional manner.

In form, the traditional Javanese funeral is a combination of Islamic precept and indigenous practice, of scriptural dogma and local belief. As in the Roman Catholic rites on Barra, the requirements of the universalistic, scriptural religion are met in the idiom of native tradition. In Javanese village tradition, the funeral ceremony is one variety of a generic ceremony, called slametan, which is given at crucial points, not only of the life cycle, but of the agricultural and ceremonial cycle as well.

The slametan is mainly a communal feast, performed under religious auspices, for a group of neighbors. "The demands of the labor-intensive rice and dry-crop agricultural process require the perpetuation of specific modes of technical cooperation and enforce a sense of community in the otherwise rather self-contained families—a sense of community which the slametan clearly reinforces." (Geertz, 1957, p. 36) The traditional funeral slametan is directed by an Islamic

official, the Modin, who supervises the preparation of the body for burial, leads in the chanting of Arabic prayers, and reads a graveside speech to the deceased, reminding him of his duties as a believing Moslem.

This ritual form is carried through quickly and in a mood reminiscent of that described for Hopi funerals. The mourners are supposed to be relatively calm and undemonstrative. "Tears are not approved of and certainly not encouraged; the effort is to get the job done, not to linger over the pleasures of grief . . . the whole momentum of the Javanese ritual system is supposed to carry one through grief without severe emotional disturbance." (*Ibid*, p. 40) Such was the expectation of the dead boy's uncle when he began funeral preparations and sent for the Modin.

But when the Modin came, the uncle's expectation was not realized and, to the great chagrin of the boy's family and their friends, the Modin refused to lead the funeral rites. This untoward, discomfiting and exceptional refusal came about for these reasons.

There was in 1954, a great cultural-political split in this town, and elsewhere in Java. Those on one side were Islamic purists who wanted to emphasize the scriptural sanctions and diminish the indigenous practices. Those of the other side wanted to stress the indigenous practices and mute the Islamic elements. Allegiance to one or another side was expressed through political affiliation. In this town, the Islamic patriots belonged to the country's largest Moslem party, Masjumi, which supported an "Islamic State" for Indonesia rather than a secular republic. Those townsmen who advocated the indigenous tradition belonged to another political party, Permai, which was smaller nationally but locally strong. Its platform was a fusion of Marxist politics, anti-Islamic ideas, and nativist religion.

Worried about controlling the conflict between the two parties, the local administrative officer had called together the religious officials, the Modins, most of whom were Masjumi leaders. He instructed them not to participate in funeral rites for supporters of the Permai party.

Hence on the morning of July 17, 1954, when a Modin arrived at the house where the boy had died, he saw a Permai poster displayed there and refused to perform the ceremony. He rubbed in his refusal by saying piously that since the Permai people belonged to another religion, he did not know the correct burial rituals for it. All he knew was Islam.

Though the Permai people are anti-Islam, they still had no other funeral rite than that traditionally performed and led by a Modin. The dead boy's uncle had never thought that his political allegiance would present such a distressing problem. The funeral preparations

were halted, the people of the bereaved household were distraught, the uncle exploded in rage—rather uncharacteristic behavior for a Javanese. Friends of the family gathered, but no one knew what to do.

When the dead boy's father and mother arrived, the aunt—who had earlier given vent to loud, unrestrained wailing—now rushed to her sister and the two women “dissolved into wild hysterics.” These unusual and shocking outbursts made the assembled people all the more nervous and uneasy.

At last, through the good offices of a go-between, the dead boy's father requested an Islamic funeral, implying that he was not of the Permai party. The Modin then carried through the usual burial rites. But three days later, at the first commemorative feast, the usual slametan procedure—which includes an Islamic chant for the dead—was not followed. Instead there was a political speech and philosophical discussion, together with a strange and atypical talk by the dead boy's father expressing his feelings and his confusion.

His confusion arose because the traditional ceremony had become unsuited to his social circumstances. The ceremony functioned well when the group to be consolidated was a set of village neighbors who shared many close ties—economic, religious, personal, social. But in the town neighborhood, such village bonds are not as relevant; the important bonds are based on ideology, class, occupation, and politics rather than on local proximity. Hence the traditional funeral ceremony, when held now in an urban setting, “increasingly serves to remind people that the neighborhood bonds they are strengthening through a dramatic enactment are no longer the bonds which emphatically hold them together.” (*Ibid*, p. 52) The boy's funeral provides an example of the incongruity between the old ceremonial form and the new social conditions. It is likely that this incongruity will not long exist. Ceremonial forms can be changed. In future years funeral rites may be altered and may then accord better with the broad purposes of personal and social integration for which men, in Java as elsewhere, commonly perform the last rites.

## VII

“A funeral rite,” Raymond Firth observes, “is a social rite *par excellence*. Its ostensible object is the dead person, but it benefits not the dead, but the living.” (1951, p. 63) This comment occurs in the course of an analysis of an incident involving a clash of interests in a chief's family in Tikopia. A grandson of the old chief has been lost at sea. The boy's father wants to prepare a suitably elaborate funeral ceremony; his brothers—the other sons of the chief—want to postpone the funeral lest it detract from a festival for the clan

gods which the family should soon give in properly lavish style. There is a flare-up of temper; there is mollification by neutral people; finally the funeral is given precedence and familial solidarity is, at least overtly, reestablished.

For the very reason that funerals so often are occasions when social solidarity ought to be displayed in a society, they can also present situations where the lack of solidarity is dramatically highlighted. In the Kota Dry Funeral, there is a juncture when all Kotas who are present at the ceremony come forward, one by one, to give a parting bow of respect to the relic of each deceased.

Around this gesture of social unity, violent quarrels often rage. (Mandelbaum, 1955, pp. 226-229) When kinsmen of a deceased Kota are fervent supporters of one of the two opposing factions in Kota society, they may try to prevent a person of the other faction from making this gesture of respect and solidarity. This is tantamount to declaring that those of the other faction are not Kotas at all—a declaration which neither side will quietly accept. Thus a ritual action which symbolized concord has frequently triggered a good deal of discord. Yet among the Kotas, as in other societies, neutral people try to bring about a compromise; the ceremony is somehow completed with as much show of social unity as can be managed—especially for funerals of the great men of the tribe.

Such show of unity is graphically depicted, on the grand scene of European history, by photographs of some memorable funeral corteges. If we turn to the picture of the glittering array of monarchs in procession behind the coffin of Edward VII or the picture of the more sombrely clad pallbearers carrying the coffin of Josef Stalin, we can appreciate that difference may be sunk, if only temporarily, on the occasion of a funeral.

In earlier European history, the State funeral was an important symbol of the continuity of monarchical power. In medieval France, for example, the death of a king might be followed by great disorder, because his successor was not sovereign until his coronation. By the sixteenth century, however, a new king in France exercised full powers from the moment of his predecessor's death. The royal funeral became, not only a symbol of proper succession, but also one of the agencies for the smooth transfer of power. (Gieseck, 1954)

Funeral monuments like the Pyramids and the Taj Mahal attest to the political aspects which have long been entailed in State funerals. Codes of testamentary law reflect the economic aspects of death rites. The rites, the codes, the monuments—whether for a great personage or for an ordinary person—have often expressed religious ideas of immortality as well as those societal concepts which we have here discussed. (cf. Bendann 1930, Frazer 1913-1922, Ashley-Montagu 1955, Puckle 1928)

In some societies, the belief in immortality is considered to be most important for the consolation of the bereaved; in other societies, as among the Kotas, the concept of the afterworld is not of any great interest. At funerals, social forces may be effectively rallied to solace the mourners or there may be special social conditions which hamper their readjustment.

In modern American society, E. H. Volkart suggests, there is built up such great attachment to the particular persons of one's family that readjustment becomes very difficult after their death. "Thus whereas we stress the sense of loss and recognize the need for replacement basically the culture creates conditions in which the deceased is irreplaceable because he cannot ever really be duplicated . . . In this way the bereaved person has no automatic cultural solution to the problem of replacement." (Volkart, 1957, pp. 299-300)

American culture has, in certain respects, and for some Americans, become deritualized. Persons bereaved by a death sometimes find that they have no clear prescription as to what to do next. In such cases, each has to work out a solution for himself. After the typical period of shock and disorganization, these mourners can receive little help toward personal reorganization. When individual solutions to such recurrent and poignant problems are repeatedly made, they may tend to coalesce and to become institutionalized. Hence it may be that the people who have reacted strongly against the older rituals—because they were rituals—may institute some new version of the old ritual forms.

Death ceremonies, like other cultural forms, are changed in time by those who use them as a result of changes in their social, cultural, and psychological environment. Yet the fundamental psychological and social purposes which are accomplished by funeral rites remain quite similar. These purposes, illustrated in the Kota example, can be met in many different ways. One way is the extravagant mourning ceremony of the Cocopa; another is the sparse, hurried ceremony of the Hopi. The death rites may be taken in the community's normal stride, as in Barra, or may touch on especially conflicted feelings among the survivors, as with the Apache. A funeral may rouse social conflict, as in the example from Java, but funeral rites are generally intended to be a means of strengthening group solidarity.

Rituals for death can have many uses for life. And the study of these rites can illuminate much about a culture and a society. Thus the Kotas' certainty about the effectiveness of their Dry Funeral provides a clue to their general certainty about dealings with the supernatural. The violent quarrels which have taken place at Kota funerals direct our attention to certain values which they hold most dear. (Mandelbaum, 1955) Once we have suitable analyses, from a number of peoples, of the ways in which death ceremonies (and

other biologically based universals) fit into, reflect, and reinforce cultural themes, it will be possible to go on to some really interesting problems. For example, the Hopi funeral rites and those in the Javanese town are very dissimilar in specific detail, but seem quite alike in mood. Is the similarity only a superficially apparent one, is it an epiphenomenon of little consequence, or does it give evidence of structural similarity of some kind between two societies widely different in the content of their cultures? In this and in other ways, the melancholy subject of funerals may provide one good entryway to the analysis of cultures and to the understanding of peoples.

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## FEATURES OF KINSHIP IN AN ASUR VILLAGE

R. K. JAIN

The network of social relationships constitutes one of the major interests for the social anthropologist. While most of the relationships can be studied as they crystallise into specific organizational units such as the family, the clan, the moiety, a holistic comprehension of the warp and woof which knit the pattern of social life especially among the so-called primitive people can be obtained by the study of their kinship system, which to quote Murdock, "is not a social group, nor does it ever correspond to an organized aggregation of individuals. It is merely . . . a structured system of relationship, in which individuals are bound one to another by complex ramifying and interlocking ties"<sup>1</sup> Kinship, which in anthropological literature today refers to the relationship of an individual by affinity as well as consanguinity has been referred to as, "the rod on which one leans throughout life"<sup>2</sup> As culture advances, contacts become more numerous and the number of associations multiplies, kinship ties start loosening their hold upon the people. But under primitive conditions where the size of the population and the village is necessarily small, and where the canvas of interpersonal relationships is restricted to the clansman, the man in the next house and the co-worker on the field, relatives by consanguinity and affinity figure prominently at every turn and twist of the life-stream of an individual. That is why the social anthropologist whose main concern is still with primitive life gives an important place to the study of kinship, and kinship studies are a special feature of anthropological moorings.

Of the many polemics in the field of kinship studies none has proved so pregnant and promising as the one seeking to discover the relationship between kinship terminology, a primarily philological phenomenon, and the sociologically important behaviour patterns towards individuals referred to and addressed by various kinship terms. While the problem has been studied against field data by the British 'Africanists' in Africa, by Radcliffe-Brown in Australia and by his students of the Chicago School against North American ethnography, systematic field investigation in regards to this question has not, it would seem, engaged the attention of the student of Indian kinship. I have ventured to study this problem in the light of the data collected from the Asurs of Jobhipat during a brief sojourn among them in the winter of 1957-58.

<sup>1</sup> Murdock G. P. *Social Structure*, 1949, pp. 92-93.

<sup>2</sup> Firth, Raymond, 'We the Tikopia', 1936, p. 269 quoted in Lowie, 'Social Organization', p. 59.

In the interests of precision and a certain sense of direction in the inquiry it was thought advisable to start with a well formulated hypothesis. In order to find one, I turned to the three cornered controversy between W. H. R. Rivers, A. L. Kroeber and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, regarding the relation of kinship terminology to social organization. While Rivers held that there was a causal relationship between kinship terminology and social organization or that the characteristics of a kinship nomenclature are determined 'rigorously' by social or sociological factors, Kroeber's contention was that the features of a system of terminology are determined primarily by language and reflect psychology not sociology. To quote Radcliffe-Brown, on the other hand, "In opposition to Kroeber, and in a certain sense in agreement with Rivers, I hold that all over the world there are important correspondences between kinship nomenclature and social practices"<sup>3</sup> Radcliffe-Brown, however, differs totally from Rivers in maintaining that there may not be *causal* relations between kinship nomenclature and social practices. He only reiterates his earlier statement that "we can expect to find in the majority of human societies, *a fairly close correlation between the terminological classification of kindred or relatives and the social classification . . . the former is revealed in kinship terminology, the latter . . . specifically in the attitudes and behaviours of relatives to one another*"<sup>4</sup> With this statement of Radcliffe-Brown as the hypothesis the present investigation sought to find out how far the data on kinship among Asurs of Jobhipat tends to bear it out or reject it.

### FIELD TECHNIQUES

The data to be obtained was clearly of two sorts: (1) regarding kinship terminology, terms of address and reference, and (2) concerning behaviour patterns between important relatives. The techniques were, therefore, chosen accordingly. Interviews were by far the most numerous and observation, for the most part non-participant, was mainly used to check information obtained from informants. Information regarding the pattern of behaviour between relatives was obtained in as many families as possible and at fire-side talks between members of neighbouring families. As it happened there was no birth, marriage, death, tribal hunt or panchayat during the period of our stay in the village. Nevertheless the celebration of their after-harvest festival which drew relatives (mostly affines) from neighbouring villages did extend the scene of coactivity for observation.

<sup>3</sup> Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'The Study of Kinship Systems' in *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'Kinship Terminologies in California', *American Anthropologist*, N. S. XXXVII quoted in Murdock, *Social Structure* p. 107.

A serious handicap was the language difficulty which could be circumvented but partially by conversing with the people in an amalgam of pidgin Hindi, Bhojpuri and a few critical words of their own dialect.

The interviews were not structured, although information was collected along predetermined lines. Most of the interviews were devoted to the gathering of genealogies which were collected from persons of all ages and both the sexes, although the majority of them were elicited from males, the women being more shy and less able to understand our speech. Attempt was made to record genealogies and behaviour patterns in one and the same interview, but it was found difficult to keep the respondent's interest from flagging after 15 to 20 minutes' exercise in kinship algebra. The reluctance, sometimes, of the respondent to tell about his father and great grand-fathers was successfully met by evoking his family pride by saying that he should feel proud in recalling the names of his glorious ancestors. One case study, that of Birsa's marriage, provided some valuable information regarding the role of various relatives during a person's marriage. Efforts were made to ensure the reliability of the data by comparing genealogical tables obtained from related individuals, by cross checking information from different interviews, by resorting to a few group interviews, and also, mainly, by verifying information by means of observation.

#### ASUR KINSHIP SYSTEM

The Asur kinship system was studied in Jobhipat, which is one the four *tolas* (Jobhipat, Titua, Tewarpani, and Narma) of village Narma in the Gumla Sub-division of District Ranchi in South Bihar. The district of Ranchi lies between  $22^{\circ} 21'$  and  $23^{\circ} 43'$  north latitudes and between  $84^{\circ} 0'$  and  $85^{\circ} 54'$  east longitudes. Literally speaking, a *tola* is translated as 'ward'. But the character of Jobhipat as an autonomous unit is put to relief by its possession of a panchayat, a headman and four local 'deuris' (religious functionaries). Its dependence on village Narma is manifest mainly in that the common 'pahan' (head priest) of the four *tolas* resides in Narma.

Jobhipat is situated about 98 miles west of Ranchi along the motorable Bagesakhua-Kujampat Road which bifurcates south-west from the Ranchi-Netarhat Road at the 92nd milestone. The *tola* is located in the extreme north-western corner of the District on a hill about 3,620 ft. above sea level. The total area is about 1,000 sq. yds. Topographically it resembles the top of a table with slopes on all sides. There is a deep descent in the north-western direction, and here about 500 ft. below Jobhipat is a 'Jobhi' (surface-spring). The *tola* derives its name from this 'Jobhi' and 'pat' which is a general term for plateau.

The population of Jobhipat is only 172 of which 90 are males and 82 females. The following table gives the age distribution of the population :

AGE	NUMBER OF PERSONS
Infants (upto 5 years)	27
Children (5 years to 9 years)	27
Adolescents (10 years to 18 years)	43
Adults (19 years to 34 years)	45
Adults-Old (34 years and above)	30
Total	172

The total number of homesteads in Jobhipat is 27 out of which 21 are Asur, 4 Munda and 2 Oraon. The population of Jobhipat seems to fall into four more or less distinct clusters of homesteads designated here as clusters A, B, C, and D for convenience. The following table gives the tribe-wise, cluster-wise distribution of the population :

CLUSTERS	TRIBES			TOTAL
	ASURS	MUNDAS	ORAONS	
A	40	8	5	53
B	52	1	8	61
C	19	12	—	31
D	27	—	—	27
Total No.	138	21	13	172
percentage	80.2	12.2	7.6	100

(Based on the census of the village taken by us in December, 1957)

Radcliffe-Brown speaks of 'Kinship system' in a comprehensive and all-embracing manner, meaning by it, dyadic relations between person and person in a community, social groups unilateral and bilateral; rights and duties of relatives to one another and social usages observed in social contacts, ancestor worship if it is to be found, and finally, terms used in a society in addressing or referring to relatives. Kinship terminology, according to this connotation of the term kinship system is, therefore, as much its part as kinship usages. For our purpose, however, the term 'kinship system' is better used in its more limited sense as "the pattern of social usages observed in the reciprocal behaviour of persons who are, or are regarded as being related by

kinship or affinity"<sup>5</sup> while the question of kinship terminology will be considered separately.

Spatial proximity or remoteness and proximity or remoteness of relationship are important factors in regulating the frequency and intensity of interpersonal relationships between various relatives in the village. The family relatives gain priority over all others in this respect. Besides these close associates, the paternal kinsmen, especially the male siblings of the father and their spouses and children are relatives with whom contacts are most numerous. Maternal kinsmen usually belong to another village, and hence the limit on contacts with them. The common patrilocal pattern of residence is, however, disturbed in some instances by matri-patrilocal residence. The children of a man who comes to the village as *ghardamad* and settles there even after establishing his own household, have closer contacts with their maternal kin as compared to the relatives of their father. Contacts with affinal relatives are relatively few because mates are usually acquired from outside Jobhipat. Nevertheless, the proximity of these villages enables a regular exchange of visits by in-law relatives. Thus, while the members of one's own family group and the paternal kinsmen are the closest relatives of a person, his maternal relatives and affines also enter what may be described as "the circle of close relatives". Ready at his beck and call in the hour of need are also his clansmen in the village. More distant relatives rarely figure in the life of an individual. The usual pattern of behaviour between relatives is characterized by a willingness to help one another in straightened circumstances, by cooperation in any undertaking and by hospitality. Nevertheless, quarrels and ill feelings between near relatives are also usually heard of, although they do not undermine to any ignominious degree the normal pattern of reciprocity and sharing in one another's sufferings and celebrations.

The following is a delineation of some of the patterned modes of behaviour between various important relatives in Jobhipat.

#### PARENTS AND CHILDREN

The normal pattern of relationship between father and son is that of superordination and subordination. The father hands down the family tradition and mores of the society to his son by way of formal and informal instruction through the use of the authority he commands over and the obedience he demands from his son. It is the father who delegates to each of his sons his share of responsibility in day-to-day work. For whatever potential of change in the traditional father-son relationship the Asur Avasiya Vidyalaya may have, there does

<sup>5</sup> Royal Anthropological Institute, Notes and Queries on Anthropology, 6th ed., 1951, p. 76.

not seem to be a major alteration in the usual pattern of superordination and subordination between father and son at the present day. The father continues to exercise his authority and as Gendra told me in one of our more informal chats, his son Budhu runs away to the school for the fear that he should be complained against truancy to the headmaster by his father. The father is also an affectionate elder for his son. The concern with which a suitable daughter-in-law is sought by a man and the munificence with which the son's affines are treated are but two instances of the many ways in which this affection is manifest. It is the son's duty to support his father in the latter's old age. This, however, is an ideal, turned to actuality only in cases where the father is physically incapable of doing any active work. Normally a man continues to lead an active life till the age of 60, by which time he also retains most of his prerogatives as the family-head.

Relations between mother and son, though of the same general type as between father and son are characterised by more tenderness on the part of the mother and by grant of greater liberties to the son. When married, a son is expected to take sides with his mother rather than with his wife in case of a quarrel between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. But this is an ideal, not always observed. The mother plays the same role in the life of her daughter as the father does in that of his son. She trains up a girl for tribal womanhood while the father arranges a suitable match for his daughter.

#### GRAND-PARENTS AND GRAND-CHILDREN

A relationship of privileged familiarity obtains between both paternal and maternal grandparents and grandchildren. There is a lot of joking and hilarity between these two classes of relatives which is strongly reminiscent of similar relationships described by the late S. C. Roy among the Oraons. This pattern of reciprocal ridiculing, teasing and vocal exchanges does not obtain so intensely between grand-children and maternal grand-parents largely due to the distance separating them. Scarcely was there an informant whose eyes did not brighten up and whose lips did not betray a smile of understanding at the mere mention of *aja-aji* and *nati-natin* (grand-father-grandmother and grandson-granddaughter) relationship. As the Asurs will themselves tell you, there is no other relationship which allows so much *hansi thattha* (joking and hilarity) between relatives. The grand-father would jokingly remind his grand-daughter that he is still young in spirits, and that he would not let his girl (the grand-daughter) be married to anyone other than to himself. In extreme hilarity sometimes a grand-child besmears the clothes of his grand-parents with food. A grandson would sometimes pour

water in his grandfather's *jhara* (rice beer) and would put the blame on his grand-mother when the culprit is searched for. Such relationship between these alterante generations, nevertheless, cannot and do not lead to marriage. Incidentally, mention may also be made of the custom of naming the grandchildren after grandparents, mostly the grandson after the father's father.

Although it would require a thorough analysis of the Asur social structure before a more competent explanation of the joking relationship between grandparents and grand-children can be attempted, yet certain features of their kinship behaviour point strongly to the one offered by Prof. Radcliffe-Brown in his attempt to explain privileged familiarity between alternate generations. Joking relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, he holds, is "a method of ordering a relation which combines social conjunction and disjunction".<sup>6</sup> The element of attachment or conjunction in this relation accrues from the fact that the grandparents and grandchildren are united by kinship; that of separation or disjunction because the two are separated by age and by the social difference between those who are entering and those who are retiring from active social life of the community. Since the grandparental generation in contradistinction to the parental generation is not entrusted with the task of handing down social tradition a relationship of reciprocal privileged familiarity between the alternate generations provides an excellent mechanism for combining the conjunctive and disjunctive interests. We have already examined the authoritarian role of the father in Asur kinship; the relations of grand-parents and grand-children can then be regarded as "a foil to those of parents and children".<sup>7</sup> This conclusion is supported by Asur kinship terminology, which as we shall see, makes a clear classificatory terminological distinction between relatives belonging to the immediately ascending proximate generation and those belonging to the second ascending generation.

#### AGNATIC RELATIVES

The one feature which clearly and observably sets the agnatic relatives of a person apart from his maternal kin is the frequency of contacts with the former as against the latter. The fundamental behaviour patterns are not found to differ markedly. Because of his presence in the hamlet, usually in a hut next door, the father's brother, whether elder or younger, accompanies the party which places the stick (*lathi tekna*) at the threshold of bride's house, signalizing the final settlement of match for a boy. The attitude of the ego towards

<sup>6</sup> Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'On Joking Relationship', reprinted in 'Structure and Function in Primitive Society', p. 97.

<sup>7</sup> Fortes, M., 'The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.' 1949. p. 230.

his father's elder brother is marked by a sense of respect, in some instances more than one has for one's own father. Father's younger brother is also respected, although, sometimes the attitude verges on to comradeship especially when the difference in age between nephew and uncle is not much. At the time of his marriage the paternal uncles's wives are allotted duties as the needs of the hour demand. They pound rice in *dhenki* (wooden pounding machine), prepare *marua* (a cereal) paste from which dishes are to be cooked for the marriage feast and rub oil on the bridegroom's body.

#### MATERNAL RELATIVES

As the mother usually belongs to another village and always to a different clan, the frequency of social intercourse between mother's brother and his nephew is much curtailed. Marriage provides an occasion for the meeting of all relatives and a mother's brother attends his niece's marriage with a pitcher-full of *jhara* (rice beer) and 4 seers of rice. Asked whether relations with one's mother's brother were more affectionate than with father's brother, the informants were not able to give a definite answer. There is no privileged familiarity with one's avuncular relatives and it is "wrong" to cut jokes with one's mother's brother, whether younger or elder. The maternal uncle is not called upon to perform any special task for his nephews and nieces. The ego does not show any special or distinctive feature in his behaviour towards mother's sisters. Their visits to the ego's place are few and far between, unless and until, of course, they are married in the same village. Their attitude towards the ego may be summed up as being 'maternal' in all its facets.

#### SIBLINGS AND COUSINS

When children, brothers are playmates and coherdsmen ; there is a close and constant companionship between the two. When they grow up and get married, and build separate houses even, this relationship normally remains unaltered. Cases are reported of quarrels between brothers resulting in separation and division of lands and houses. The elder brother acts in place of father after the latter's death or when he is senile. The elder sister is respected by the younger brother; she carries the latter in infancy in a baggy sling on her back if the mother is busy doing household duties. The younger sister, on the other hand, bows down to touch the feet of her elder siblings on such occasions as her visit to or return from affines' place. Mutual understanding and affection mark relationship between sisters. The two sleep in the same *gitiora* (dormitory) and the elder sister takes pains to decorate and dress up her younger sister on the occasion of a

dance, for example. The latter learns many things by emulating and imitating the example of her elder sister.

Relationships with cousins—both parallel and cross—are similar to those with siblings. Marriage between cousins, cross as well as parallel, is unknown to the Asurs of Jobhipat, a fact which contrasts sharply with the very wide prevalence of cross cousin marriage among the neighbouring tribes of the region.

### SPOUSES

The male of the mates enjoys a higher status among these patrilineal and patrilocal people. However, an analysis of behaviour patterns and attitudes characterizing spouse relationship puts to relief most of the relations as being of near equality. Each partner has equally important duties to fulfil in accordance with the traditional division of labour. No piece of property is the exclusive possession of either, and divorce is legally sanctioned to neither. The freedom with which a woman talks to a third person in her husband's presence is remarkable.

### PARENTS-IN-LAW AND CHILDREN-IN-LAW

Relationship between parents-in-law and children-in-law is of the same general order as between parents and children. The son-in-law treats his father-in-law as his own father, this is all the more so where a son-in-law is a *ghardamad*. Mother-in-law and son-in-law avoidance is unknown. They sit and chat together, drink *jhara* (rice beer) in each other's company, share food in the same *thali*. Similar is the case with the daughter-in-law who is usually observed chatting most informally with her father-in-law as a daughter would chat with her father. I have seen them giving suckle to their babies without being in the least conscious of their father-in-law's presence or in fact, even talking to him at the same time.

### SIBLINGS-IN-LAW

A relationship of mutual joking obtains between a man and his wife's younger brother, although the extent of privileged familiarity is somewhat attenuated on the side of the younger relative. Wife's younger brother's wife is treated as one's own younger sister. Wife's elder brother is respected although the nature of the respect shown is more like that due to a senior comrade. The behaviour with wife's elder brother's wife is similar to that towards one's own elder sister. With his wife's younger sister or *sari* a man enjoys privileged familiarity, and the jokes which range from vocal to physical ones may verge

on vulgarity. A man treats his wife's elder sister as he does his own elder sister. His relations with the husbands of both are marked by parity and comradeship.

Ideally, a woman should avoid her husband's elder brother. The pattern of reciprocal avoidance between these relatives finds manifestation in the non-acceptance of food hand to hand and in the non-utterance of each other's name. Only at the time of a person's younger brother's marriage and on one of the two *juars* (evenings) of marriage these restrictions are relaxed, and a woman is even asked to sit in the lap of her husband's elder brother. Husband's younger brother, on the other hand, stands in a relationship of patterned joking with a woman. He is also a potential spouse whom she may marry after her husband's death. Genealogical data show the presence of one widow in the village, but she has not married her husband's younger brother. No cases of junior levirate came to notice. The wives of husband's elder and younger brothers are treated very much like own sisters. Relations with husband's elder and younger sisters are those of respect and comradeship respectively.

#### ASUR KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

The Asur kinship terminology like that of the neighbouring Munda, Oraon and Kharia, is characterized by a preponderance of classificatory terms, each formed by ignoring one or more of the six major and three minor criteria for making fundamental distinctions between relatives as enunciated by Kroeber.<sup>8</sup> We shall here see which of the principal relatives among the Asurs are denoted by a denotative term each and which of them are addressed and designated by a classificatory term. The kinsmen among the Asurs have been grouped into the following categories for such an analysis:

1. Paternal and Maternal kin (elders and equals).
2. Paternal kin younger to the ego.
3. Relatives in husband's father's household.
4. Relatives in wife's father's household.

(See Appendix one)

#### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TERMINOLOGY AND SYSTEM

The existence of denotative terms (*baba* and *aya*) for the father and the mother respectively is congruous with more or less exclusive patterns of behaviour with the two relatives in order. The role of the father is unique in the capacity of an instructor, protector and well-

<sup>8</sup> Kroeber, A. L., 'Classificatory Systems of Relationship' (1909) *Nature of Culture*, 1951, p. 176.

wisher of a person. The form of address for father's brother is *pitya* which is derived from the term *pita* meaning 'father'. This reflects a fairly close resemblance between the social role of one's father and his brothers and in fact, father's brothers are the relatives with whom a person more often than with any other relative comes into contact in similar contexts as with one's father. Like *baba*, *aya* as a term of reference is also applied to one's own mother alone and this is understandable considering her unique role in the life and learning of the children. Coming to parent's siblings we are confronted with the classificatory terms *bara*, *bari*, *kaka*, *kaki*, *mama* and *mami*. Marriage by exchange whereby two persons exchange one another's sisters or cousins as wives can very well result in the type of classificatory nomenclature under examination. It is indeed a prevailing form of marriage among some of the Chotanagpur tribes such as the Ho where marriage by exchange appears as a part solution of the difficulties posed by exorbitant bride price. Marriage by exchange does not obtain among the Asurs of Jobhipat. The classificatory terms *bara*, *bari*, *kaka* and *kaki* could also be explained if marriage customs among Asurs prescribed that several brothers in a family would marry respectively, sisters in another family. This also is not the case in Jobhipat. The explanation of this terminology by discerning common patterns in ego's behaviour towards relatives included under one term, for example, towards mother's brother and father's sister's husbands or towards father's younger brother and mother's younger sister's husbands is also not possible. As we have earlier noted, there are no specific differences in ego's behaviour towards or conversely the role which the siblings of father and mother play in his life. The only important difference is that the paternal male siblings are more proximate geographically than either the agnatic or maternal kin. It could then as well be expected that the father's brother and mother's brother will be classified under one term, and father's sister and mother's sister under another.

The terms *aja* and *aji* are applied commonly to the ego's second ascending paternal and maternal generations. All grand fathers are referred to and addressed as *aja* while *aji* is the term for all grandmothers. It is important to note in this connection that these terms are applied to persons of this generation alone—neither to the parental nor to the great-grand-parental. Terminologically, then, the grandparents constitute an exclusive category of kinsmen, and this terminological categorization corresponds to their social categorization of these relatives. The latter is reflected in the pattern of behaviour which is characterized as that of 'privileged familiarity' and about which we spoke earlier. The informants were unanimous in their opinion that this relationship of privileged familiarity is confined to the alternate generations alone. In actual practice, however,

because of the lesser frequency of contacts with the maternal grand-parents, joking relationship obtains in its true form between paternal grand-parents and grand-children alone.

Relations with great grand parents all of whom are designated by the terms *bara* and *bari* do not imply privileged familiarity. Rather respect for the great grand-parents characterizes this relationship. *Bara* is a term for father's elder brother and also designates mother's elder sister's husbands. Relations with these relatives also possess components of respect and obedience. What is not explained is the self reciprocal nature of the terms *bara* and *bari*. The behaviour of those who use these terms reciprocally is asymmetrical and not symmetrical. Here once more no congruence is found between kinship terminology and patterns of behaviour.

In the same generation, relationship between husband and wife is linguistically characterised by the absence of any terms of address for each other. The terms of reference are *gumkēin* for wife and *gumkē* for husband. The form of address between the spouses is therefore indirect. They cannot call each other by personal names too. After the birth of a child it is possible, on necessity, to address one's wife or husband, as so and so's mother or so and so's father respectively as the case may be. Teknomy again, is thus one type of reciprocal form of address. Reciprocity is thus a characteristic of terminological usage when spouses address each other or refer to one another (the term of reference are *gumkē* and *gumkēin*—reciprocal ones thus). Reciprocity, we have earlier seen, also marks the behaviour patterns and interpersonal relationship between the spouses. Here again, terminology and behaviour patterns show a high degree of conformity.

A correspondence is found again between the terminological and social classification of siblings in Asur social organization. The younger brother is treated as one's own son, especially after the father's death. If all the brothers live in adjacent houses, as they usually do, it is the elder brother who attends the panchayat on behalf of the younger brothers also, and it is he who orders division of labour in the field. The social distinction between the elder and the younger brothers is recognised in the relationship terms which are different for the two and in the use of the term *babu* by which a person addresses his younger brother as well as his own son. One's younger sister also is addressed by the term for daughter, i.e. *mai* and her behaviour towards the elder brother is also characterized by respect similar to that shown to one's father. By ignoring the criteria of collaterality and bifurcation we find that sibling terms are extended horizontally and bilaterally to designate all cousins cross as well as parallel. There is, as we have already seen, a similarity between a person's behaviour towards his own siblings and the children of the siblings of either

parents. Both cross cousin and parallel cousin marriage are prohibited. The kinship terminology not only for siblings and cousins is the same but the spouses of the cousins are also designated by the same terms as used for the spouses of siblings.

As we examine the terms used for ego's relatives in the first descending generation; we again find an agreement between the terminological and social classifications, for example, a man uses different terms for his own son (*babu* or *beta*) and his sister's son (*bhacha*) but *babu* or *beta* are used in addressing brothers' sons. The latter, indeed come into closer contacts and more frequently than the former. However, here too an exception is noted as when the terms of reference for the younger brother's son and elder brother's son are *bara* and *bhatij* respectively, although his behaviour towards the two is very much similar.

In ego's second descending generation *nati* and *natin* are the exact reciprocal terms of *aja* and *aji*. As we have already seen, this setting apart of grandparents and grandchildren is not only terminologically valid, but has a sociological validity too, and the two overlap. The terms for great grand children are *bara* and *bari*, applied according to whether the relative is a male or a female. The great grand children are thus differentiated from the grandchildren, as the ego's behaviour towards them is marked by affection and not privileged familiarity. However, the significance of the self reciprocal nature of the terms *bara* and *bari* remains obscure when examined from this angle too.

Considering a woman's relatives in her husband's father's household, we find the terms *sasur* and *sais* as referring to husband's father and mother respectively. However, in addressing these relatives she uses the terms *baba* and *aya* for father-in-law and mother-in-law respectively. This usage is quite in conformity with her behaviour towards these relatives, and she is in turn addressed to as *beti* although the term of reference for her is *bahuriya*. *Bahuriya* or *bhava* is again, the term by which a man addresses his younger brother's wife. This agrees with the kinship system because the younger brother stands, in somewhat the same relationship as one's own son. Nevertheless there is certain difference between a woman's relationship with her father-in-law and with her husband's elder brother. While with the former she behaves in a manner as a daughter would behave towards her father, with the latter she observes mild avoidance. This nuance in the relationship pattern is manifest in kinship terminology in so much as the younger brother's wife is more often termed *bhava* and husband's elder brother is not classified with *sasur* but is called *bhasur* or *jethsasur*. Husband's elder brother's wife is referred to as *gotani* which is a self reciprocal term, and therefore, refers to husband's younger brother's wife too. This self reciprocal term is

matched congruously with the reciprocal relations between these two relatives who are constant companions for the most time when two brothers live in adjoining huts. Similarly, the application of the term *jethsais* for husband's elder sister and *nanad* for his younger sister, and use of a denotative term *devar* for husband's younger brothers all show terminological distinction with correlated distinctions in behaviour patterns also.

The most important relatives of a man in his wife's household are her parents, her siblings and their spouses. The terms of reference, as in the case of a woman's husband's parents, are *sasur* and *sais* but again, in addressing these relatives *baba* and *aya* are uniformly used. Distinctions of age and sex are made throughout in the terminology for the kin in wife's father's household who are of the same generation. The terminological distinctions between wife's elder and younger siblings are followed by distinctions in behaviour patterns also. The attitude towards *jethsasur* and *jethsais* deriving from that of *sasur* and *sais* but oriented to analogous kin of one's own generation is similar to that towards one's own elder brother and elder sister respectively and hence the terms of address for these relatives too are *dada* and *didi*. With wife's younger siblings the ego has a joking relationship and these are thus terminologically distinguished from the older ones by the terms *sara* and *sari* for wife's younger brother and younger sister respectively. The terms for the affinal relatives of the affinal relatives of a man, i.e. for the spouses of his wife's siblings again show correspondence with particular forms of behaviour.

The foregoing analysis of the relationship between kinship terminology and behaviour patterns shows that while there is no absolute correspondence between the two among the Asurs of Jobhipat, there is a general tendency in that direction. The hypothesis which we sought to examine cannot be modified in the light of the data presented here. By way of a conclusion, however, it might be said that while the hypothesis is generally supported by our data several exceptions are to be countered.

These, to sum up once again, are :

1. The classification of the siblings of parents.
2. 'Self-reciprocal' nature of the terms *bara* and *bari*, extending downwards to include younger brother's son and daughter without accompanying 'symmetry' in behaviour of the relatives.
3. Terminological distinction between younger and elder brother's children without distinction in behaviour towards the two.

A list of the important kinship terms which have been used in the text :

#### A. Paternal and Maternal Kin (elders and equals)

Father—*Baba*; Father's brother (elder)—*Bara*; Father's brother (younger)—*Kaka*; Father's el. brother's wife—*Bari*; Father's yo. brother's wife—*Kaki*; Father's sister (elder and younger)—*Mami*; Father's sister's husband—*Mama*; Father's father—*Aja*; Father's mother—*Aji*; Father's father's brother—*Aja*; Father's father's sister—*Aji*; Father's mother's brother—*Aja*; Father's mother's sister—*Aji*; Father's father's father—*Bara*; Father's father's mother—*Bari*; Father's mother's father—*Bara*; Father's mother's mother—*Bari*;

Mother—*Aya*; Mother's sister (elder)—*Bari*; Mother's sister (younger)—*Kaki*; Mother's el. sister's husband—*Bara*; Brother's yo. sister's husband—*Kaka*; Mother's brother (elder and younger)—*Mama*; Mother's brother's wife—*Mami*; Mother's father—*Aja*; Mother's mother—*Aji*; Mother's father's brother—*Aja*; Mother's father's sister—*Aji*; Mother's father's father—*Bara*; Mother's father's mother—*Bari*; Mother's mother's father—*Bara*; Mother's mother's mother—*Bari*;

Brother (elder)—*Dada*; El. Brother's wife—*Bhouji*; Sister (el.)—*Didi*; El. Sister's husband—*Bhatu*.

(The same terms are extended to include cousins—parallel and cross—and their spouses of the same category).

#### B. Paternal Kin younger to the ego.

Brother (younger)—*Bhai*; You. Brother's wife—*Bhava* or *Bahuriya*; Sister (younger)—*Bahin* or *Mai*; You. Sister's husband—*Bahin* or *damad*; Son—*Beta* or *Babu*; Son's wife—*Bahuriya*; Daughter—*Beti* or *Mai*; Daughter's husband—*Damad*; El. Brother's son—*Bhatij* or *Bhatij beta*; El. Brother's daughter—*Bhatijin*; El. Sister's son—*Bhagina* or *Bhacha*; El. Sister's daughter—*Bhagini* or *Bhachi*; You. Brother's son—*Bara*; You. brother's daughter—*Bari*; You. Sister's son—*Bhagina* or *Bhacha*; Yo. Sister's daughter—*Bhagini* or *Bhachi*; Son's son—*Nati*; Son's daughter—*Natin*; Daughter's son—*Nati*; Daughter's daughter—*Natin*; Son's Son's son—*Bara*; Son's son's daughter—*Bari*; Son's daughter's Son—*Bara*; Son's daughter's daughter—*Bari*.

#### C. Relatives in husband's father's household.

Husband—*Gumkē*; Husband's father—*Sasur*—(*Baba*); Husband's mother—*Sais* (*Aya*); Husband's father's el. brothers—*Sasur* (*Bara*); Husband's wife—*Sais* (*Bari*); Husband's father's yo. brother—*Sasur* (*Kaka*); Husband's father's el. brother's and father's yo. brother's wife—*Sais* (*Kaki*); Husband's father's sister—(elder and younger)—*sais* (*Mami*); Husband's father's Sister's husband—*Sasur* (*Mama*);

Husband's elder brother—*Bhasur* or *Jethsasur*; Husband's el. brother's wife—*Gotani*; Husband's el. sister—*Jethsais*; Husband's el. sister's husband—*Dada*; Husband's younger brother—*Devar*; Husband's yo. brother's wife—*Gotani*; Husband's younger Sister—*Nanad*; Husband's younger sister's husband—*Damad*;

*D. Relatives in wife's father's household.*

Wife—*Gumkēin*; Wife's father—*Sasur (baba)*; Wife's mother—*Sais (Aya)*; Wife's elder brother—*Jethsar* or *Jethiasasur*; Wife's el. brother's wife—*Didi*; Wife's elder sister—*Jethsais*; Wife's el. sister's husband—*Sarhu*; Wife's younger brother—*Sara*; Wife's yo. brother's wife—*Bahuriya*; Wife's younger sister—*Sari*; Wife's yo. sister's husband—*Sarhu*.

## “LONG BREATH” AND “TAKING FIRE”: CULTURE SURVIVALS IN GAMES OF CHASE

PAUL G. BREWSTER

The examination of apparently insignificant pastimes has a value long since recognized in comparative ethnography and gives us at the same time an insight into the method of training the young practised by different peoples. *More than this, in the games of children there survive dead or dying customs and superstitions of their ancestors, so that they form a little museum of the ethnography of the past.*

C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achenee*, II, 206

Perhaps nowhere in the whole field of children's games does the second statement in the above quotation substantiate itself more strongly than in the two features which form the basis of the present paper.

In its simplest form, the first of these consists merely in repeating a certain formula until the breath is gone and the speaker is forced to inhale. The players do this in turn, and the winner is he who holds out longest before having to draw a breath. This pastime, which is to be found in many cultures, is apparently a simple competitive game intended only to furnish amusement, although MacLagan has suggested that a secondary and more practical objective may have been the development of strong lungs, certainly a *desideratum* for mountain dwellers.<sup>1</sup> In some instances at least the formula recited is not a nonsense jingle but a charm the continued repetition of which not only tests the lung power of the reciter but also effects the prevention or the cure of certain ailments.<sup>2</sup>

It is when this practice occurs not as a game in itself but as part of another that it takes on added significance. The employing of it in this way is exemplified in the game descriptions which follow.

In the Nigerian *Omo ni mo wa ra : mi o ra eru* (I come to buy children; I do not buy slaves) a boy from one line of players walks toward the other, carrying a cowrie. As he walks, he must keep calling out “Okan-o!” (“One cowrie!”). If he can reach the other line of players without having stopped his call through lack of breath, he deposits the cowrie and returns. If, however, he stops calling before completing his journey, he is held prisoner by the opposing team.<sup>3</sup> A game somewhat resembling the above is played by several tribes in the Sudan. One boy from each of the two lines of players places the fingers of one hand on top of his head, takes a deep breath, and walks briskly around the opposite line and back to his own. During all this time he must chant without drawing breath. If he

chokes or if his voice breaks, the players of the opposing side chase him and pinch his arms. In the Shilluk and Acholi forms of the game, the players sing a song ; the Bari and the Latuko merely march around humming one note.<sup>4</sup>

In the Indian *Hutu-tu*, which is played on a rectangular field divided by a line into two parts of equal size, a player crosses the centre line into enemy territory for the purpose of touching as many as possible of his opponents and thus putting them out of the game. As soon as he crosses the line into the camp of the other party, he must begin saying “*Hutu-tu-tu*” and must continue to say this, without taking a breath, until safely back on his own side. If he can be caught and held until he has to take a breath, he is out. If, on the other hand, he manages to reach his own side or even to touch the centre line without having stopped his speech, he is safe and all those who have laid hands on him are out.<sup>5</sup> The same game is played by the Marma of the Chittagong Hills, who have learned *Hutu-tu* from their Bengali neighbours. The Marma variant is called *Ti-doi*.<sup>6</sup>

Holding the breath is present also, but only as an element, in the Sinhalese *Gudu*, a game somewhat resembling tip-cat. When one team has defeated the other, one of the winners tosses up the *kuttiya* (the bit of wood which serves as missile) and knocks it as far as possible. One of his comrades then goes to where the *kuttiya* landed and knocks it on from that point. After each member of the winning team has hit the *kuttiya*, the losers must relay it to the spot from which it was originally struck, exhaling as they do so. To guarantee that they do not inhale, they are required to repeat the word “*gudu*” continuously. If one of the losers stops saying “*gudu*” or inhales, members of the winning group begin hitting the *kuttiya* from the point to which it has been carried.<sup>7</sup>

The ancient Persian game *Hoordoo* or *Kubuddee* was played between two groups of boys, each of which took its station on one side of a line (*pala*) drawn on the playing-ground. A member of one of the groups would cross this line, shouting “*kubuddee kubuddee!*” all the while, and try to touch the players of the other side. If he succeeded in touching one and was able to return to his own side without stopping his call, the boy touched was regarded as “slain” and had to leave the game. However, if the chaser stopped calling *kubuddee* before reaching safety, he was forced to withdraw.<sup>8</sup> The game, with a few slight changes, is still played in modern Iran as *Bedi-bedi* (Meshed) or *Zou* (Teheran).<sup>9</sup>

The continuous sounding of a syllable occurs also in two games from Viet-Nam, *dá vè* and *u hot*. In the former, one group of players forms a circle around a bamboo pole stuck in the ground and tries to protect it ; those of the other group try to seize it. The defenders use their feet as weapons ; the attackers use their fists. If a defender

succeeds in kicking one of the opposition, the two groups exchange roles. If one of the attacking party touches the pole without having been kicked, he and his comrades run away, crying "u!" as long as they can without inhaling. The losers follow to where the winners have stopped and must then carry the latter on their backs to the pole.<sup>10</sup> The second game begins exactly like the English and American game known as Drop the Handkerchief. When the object has finally been dropped behind one of the players composing the circle, the child now holding it starts running, crying "u!" until his breath is exhausted. As he starts to run, his neighbor on the left tries to give him a light kick. If he succeeds, the runner must stop. If he fails, he pursues the runner until he catches him. In one form of the game the leader gives to each of the others the name of a tree, and the runner (who has stopped of his own accord) selects one to come and carry him back on his shoulders.<sup>11</sup>

In the Cambodian *ták kác* or *b y saoy*, played between a group of boys and another of girls, a girl goes over to the boys' side of the field and tries to strike one of them a light blow without laughing. The rest of the boys try to make her laugh with their grimaces and their chanting of humorous or teasing comments to a hand-clapping accompaniment. If the girl strikes the boy but is struck in return, they are even. If she can strike him without being struck herself, he must join her group. However, if she is made to laugh, her side loses and its members become the boys' "slaves." In the neighboring parts of Cochin China the game is called "U" or "Vu" because the player has to make one of these two sounds during the entire time of absence from the home base.<sup>12</sup>

The Malay game of *Kabdi* closely resembles the Persian, and it will be noted that this similarity extends even to the sounds uttered by the runners. It is played only by boys, who divide into two groups of equal size and take their respective positions at opposite ends of the playing-field. A line halfway between them is drawn on the ground. A player of one of the groups crosses the line, repeating incessantly "kabdi, kabdi", and tries to drag one of the opposite party into his own territory. If he succeeds, the one dragged across the line becomes a prisoner; if he fails, he himself is a prisoner. He meets the same fate also if he stops repeating "kabdi".<sup>13</sup>

The second culture survival, which is clearly associated with the first, is perhaps best illustrated by the Greek games *Σχλαβαχια*, *Φωτια*, and *Αμπαριζα*. The first of these, played in Chios, is analogous to the English and American Prisoners' Base (Prison Base) and the French *Barres*. On a rectangular field intersected lengthwise by a line drawn on the ground the two teams of boys (not fewer than four) take their respective positions just behind the end lines. A

player of one of the teams then crosses his line to meet those of the other and to provoke one of them to come out into the open (cf. Dare Base). Whichever succeeds first in touching the other brings him back to his own line as a captive. The latter is then stationed on a spot near the end line of the captor, whence, he can be released only by being touched by one of his comrades. The game continues until the players of one group have taken prisoner all those of the other. There is the restriction that no player may touch and thus make captive one who came out onto the open field later than himself. Before he can do so, he must “renew his life” by returning to and crossing his own end line or by crossing the opponents’ line without being caught.<sup>14</sup>

In the Indian game *Kho-kho*, the playing of which is too complex to be described in detail here,<sup>15</sup> the players are divided into runners and chasers, all of whom must stay within certain well-defined boundaries, must run in certain directions, etc. A feature of the game which is of particular significance here is the giving of “*kho*”. If a chaser is exhausted and wishes to rest, he can do so by tapping on the back one of his fellow chasers (there are eight of these, seated) and calling out loudly “*kho!*” He then sits down immediately in the spot vacated by the other, who continues the chase. The tapping must always be done from behind.

And now to consider the significance of the first of the two curious performances just described and illustrated. In those cases in which the holding of the breath or the continuous repeating of a syllable or sound is competitive the act has no functional value except when, as has previously been noted, it becomes in effect a charm. The object in the Vietnamese *dá rè* or *â hôt* is to cover as much ground as possible so as to be carried back a greater distance. Since the runner must stop when he ceases to exhale, he tries to prolong the sound. The object in the Cambodian *ták kác* or *báy saoy* seems to be to make no sound or, specifically, to refrain from laughing. These games, therefore, belong to the same type as the American (and English) Tin-Tin, Poor Pussy, and Clubfist and some forms of the more widely known Angel and Devil (= German *Gartnerspiel* or *Blumen verkaufen*, Italian *I Colori*, Spanish *La Cinta* or *Los Colores*, Jugoslav *Ptice krasti*).<sup>16</sup> It will be noted, however, that the procedure is different in the Nigerian and Sudanese games, the Indian *Hutu-tu*, both the ancient and the modern forms of the Iranian game, the *U* (*Vu*) of Cochin China, and the Malayan *Kabdi*. Here the player begins calling (or holding his breath) immediately upon crossing his own line and tries to continue it until he returns to the safety of his own side of the field. In *Gudu*, which in some respects bears a very close resemblance to the lastnamed game, the continued repetition is, on the contrary, mandatory only from the

time of the player's picking up the *kuttiya* to that of his replacing it on the spot from which it was struck.

In the latter games the act of holding the breath is in the nature of a safeguard, a protection not only in the immediate vicinity of the enemy base but also in the neutral area between the two groups of players. Upon the player's ability to hold his breath or to continue exhaling depends his immunity to capture or to being forced to withdraw from the game. But why this particular form of protection rather than, *e. g.*, keeping the fingers crossed, carrying a piece of wood or iron, etc. For the answer, we must go back to a time when all localities outside the immediate area of the home were, rightly or wrongly, regarded as or suspected of being inimical. While the *mana* (*baraka*, *orenda*, *wakan*, *oki*, *megbe*) of a place was beneficent to the native inhabitants, it was hostile to all others. And, since evil forces were thought to find entry into the body through the mouth, it was the part of wisdom to hold the breath or at least not to inhale while near a spot deemed especially dangerous.<sup>17</sup>

In the second of the two game types described, the runner is protected by the *mana* attaching to his base but only until he encounters an opponent whose contact with his own base and its *mana* is more recent. In this event the first player can combat this increase in power only by returning to his home base and thus acquiring new force. When, as in *Kho*, the active player taps one of his comrades as a signal for the latter to continue the chase, he is not only designating him as his successor but is also conferring upon him the power which he himself had acquired earlier from his contact with the home base of both. In other words, he may be regarded as an intermediary or as an extension of the base itself.

#### NOTES

- 1 Robert Craig Maclagan, *Games and Diversions of Argyleshire* (London, 1901), p. 146; *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, XVII, 244.
- 2 *Transactions*, XVII, 244 (as a cure for styes). Among the Maori the continuous repetition of certain words or phrases is believed to prevent frosts; see Elsdon Best, *Games and Pastimes of the Maori* (Wellington, 1925), pp. 93-94.
- 3 R. J. Newberry, "Games and Pastimes of Southern Nigeria," *The Nigerian Field*, IX, 1 (March, 1940), 40.
- 4 A. N. Tucker, "Children's Games and Songs in the Southern Sudan," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, LXIII (1933), 183.
- 5 For a fuller description of this game, see my "A Collection of Games from India," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, LXXX, 1 (1955), 96-97.
- 6 Personal communication from Dr. Hans E. Kauffmann, Freiburg i. Br., Germany.
- 7 P. E. P. Deraniyagala, *Some Sinhala Combative, Field and Aquatic Sports and Games* (Colombo: National Museums of Ceylon, 1951), p. 32.
- 8 Jaffur Shurreef, *Qanoon-e-Islam, or the Customs of the Moosulmans of India; Comprising a Full and Exact Account of Their Various Rites and Ceremonies from the Moment of Birth till the Hour of Death*, iv. I have used the translation of G. A. Herklots (London, 1832).

<sup>9</sup> Human Relations Area Files 7 (New Haven, 1954), p. 429. This is a translation by Charles A. Messner for the HRAF of Henri Massé, *Persian Beliefs and Customs* (Paris, 1938). See also Bahār (Malek os-Choarā), "Bāzihā-ye Irani (Iranian Games)," *Ta'alim-o-Tarbiyat*, IV (1313), Nos. 11 and 12. Massé drew heavily upon Bahār, particularly for games played in Meshed and vicinity.

<sup>10</sup> Léopold Cadière, *Croyances et Pratiques Religieuses des Vietnamiens* (Saigon, 1955), pp. 277-278.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

<sup>12</sup> For this information, I am indebted to the kindness of Mme Eveline Porée-Maspero, who generously made available to me a copy of Chapter III ("Nouvel-an : description des rites") of her unpublished doctoral dissertation *Etude sur les Rites Agraires des Cambodgiens* (University of Paris, 1956).

<sup>13</sup> D. F. A. Hervey, "Malay Games," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, XXXIII (1903), 296.

<sup>14</sup> Philip Argenti and H. J. Rose, *The Folk-Lore of Chios* (New York, 1949), II, 1025. In both the other Greek forms of the game the returning to base before pursuing a later player is known as "taking fire."

<sup>15</sup> See *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, LXXX, 1 (1955), 94-95.

<sup>16</sup> The Jugoslav *Kdo se bo zasmejal* ("Who laughs?") belongs to the same type. For American Indian (Omaha) games having penalties for laughing or smiling, see *Journal of American Folklore*, I, 119.

<sup>17</sup> So well known and so widespread is this belief that the point need not be elaborated upon here. It may, however, be worth mentioning that in cases of possession the evil spirit was thought to make its entry through the mouth, and both printed accounts and drawings attest that when exorcized it usually, though not invariably, left the body by the same opening. Curiously enough, the fear of inhaling something harmful has persisted into the present century, manifesting itself now chiefly in children's holding their breath while passing a house in which someone is ill of a communicable disease. The author has a very clear recollection of having, as a boy, done this in company with others of his own age when walking by such a house. Whether the sick one was suffering from a contagious or an infectious disease was not even considered.

## CASTE AND OCCUPATION IN A MALWA VILLAGE

K.S. MATHUR

In this paper, I present a picture of the occupational structure of a Malwa village community. The aim of this analysis is to examine the relationship between caste and the pursuit of occupations for the sake of making a living.

Patal<sup>1</sup> is a village in Central Malwa. It is a predominantly Hindu village; out of a total population of 1,062 (in 1955), 1,037 are Hindus, 2 Jains and 23 Muslims. The Hindu section of population is composed of 28 caste-groups. In Table 1, I give a list of these caste-groups, arranged in order of their numerical strength in the village community. Opposite the name of each caste-group (within brackets), I have shown the traditional-calling of the caste, and its size in the village community. The table also shows the broad category of ritual status to which each caste belongs.

Each caste is usually associated with a traditional-calling. Quite often this is expressed in the caste names. Take, for example, such cases as *Kumhar* (potter), *Darji* (tailor), *Lohar* (blacksmith), *Sutar* or *Barhai* (carpenter), *Nai* (barber), *Chamar* (skinner and tanner), *Teli* (oil-presser), *Gujar* (cowherd), *Gadariya* (shepherd), and so on. These names are commonly found all over India, though in different regions, castes usually add the name of the region as a first part of the caste-name, such as *Gujerati-Chamar*, *Malwi-Chamar* and *Desh-Chamar*, Gujarat, Malwa and Desha being the names of the regions from which the three castes hailed.

The nominalistic association of castes with occupations is not the only link between caste and the pursuit of trades. Each caste—that is, endogamous social group—is traditionally associated with a certain occupation which is considered to be the traditional occupation of the caste. In a very large number of cases, as shown above, this association is reflected in the caste-name. Even if the caste-name does not express this link with its traditional-calling, it is universally known as established by tradition. For example, the caste-names *Srigaur-Brahmin*, *Rajput*, *Khati*, *Bhangi*, *Bhambi*, *Bagri*, *Bargunda* do not show any association with specific occupations; each of these castes, however, does possess and pursue a traditional-calling; the *Brahmin* are domestic-priests, the *Rajput* are warrior-cultivators, the *Khati* are farmers, the *Bhangi* are scavengers and keepers of the cremation-grounds, and so on.

As a matter of fact this link between caste and occupation is so important that one of the earliest writers on caste in India, viz., Nesfield, on the basis of his observations during the Census of India,

1881, built his classification of castes solely upon occupation. Mr. Nesfield wrote : "Function, and function only, as I think, was the foundation upon which the whole caste system of India was built up." (pp. 3-4)

TABLE 1

Ritual Purity Division	Caste-Name	Traditional calling	Numerical Strength
Cl.	1. Khati	(Cultivator)	420
Cl.	2. Rajput	(Warrior, land-owner)	100
Cl.	3. Mali	(Gardener-cultivator)	75
UCl.	4. Malwi-Balai	(Cloth-weaver, field-labourer, village-watchman)	64
UCl.	5. Nath-Jogi	(Mendicant)	44
UCl.	6. Bhambi	(Cloth-weaver)	41
UCl.	7. Bagri	(Mat-weaver)	38
Unt.	8. Desha-Chamar	(Leather-worker)	34
UCl.	9. Bargunda	(Basket-maker, hunter)	25
Cl.	10. Purabi-Thakur	(Land-owner)	24
Unt.	11. Malwi-Chamar	(Skinner, tanner, leather-worker)	20
Cl.	12. Malwi-Kumhar	(Potter)	15
Cl.	13. Gujerati-Kumhar	(Potter)	15
Cl.	14. Gujerati-Lohar	(Black-smith)	14
UCl.	15. Gujerati-Balai	(Cloth-weaver, field-labourer)	14
Unt.	16. Gujerati-Chamar	(Skinner, tanner, leather-worker)	13
Cl.	17. Darji	(Tailor)	13
Cl.	18. Nai	(Barber, messenger)	12
Cl.	19. Brahmin	(Priest, astrologer, teacher)	11
Cl.	20. Vairagi-Vaisnava	(Mendicant, temple-priest)	11
UCl.	21. Dhobi	(Washerman)	8
Cl.	22. Malwi-Lohar	(Black-smith)	6
UCl.	23. Dholi	(Drummer)	5
Cl.	24. Gosain	(Mendicant, temple-priest)	4
Cl.	25. (Khati)-Bhaat	(Genealogist to the Khati caste)	4
UCl.	26. Teli	(Oil-presser)	3
Cl.	27. Palliwal-Bania	(Trader, shop-keeper)	2
Unt.	28. Bhangi	(Scavenger)	1

Legend : Cl. 'ritually-clean' castes;  
 UCl. 'ritually-unclean' castes;  
 Unt. 'ritually-untouchable' castes.

Most of the recent writers on caste in India have recognised this caste-occupation link. Prof. Majumdar regards it as "one of the main planks on which the social stratification is obviously based". (1947, 115) Authors on village communities in India have shown that caste and the pursuit of occupations are closely linked. (Srinivas, 1955, pp. 1-2 ; Dube, 1955, pp. 36-37 ; Mayer, 1956, pp. 127-130)

In order to decide whether or not members of a caste pursue their traditional-calling and if they do, whether they do it exclusively,

primarily, or subsidiarily, I have taken recourse to simple statistics. This was done by ascertaining the source of livelihood of each household in the village. Since normally only adult men are bread-winners in this village—and in most Indian villages—this was relatively easy. It was enquired whether for making a living a given adult man followed his caste-trade and that alone, or if he pursued another calling as well but the traditional-calling took precedence in time and income, or if some other occupation took precedence over the traditional-calling in time and income.

In Table 2, I give the total number of adult men from each caste-group, those who are engaged in the pursuit of the traditional-calling of the caste, exclusively, primarily and subsidiarily, and those who have

TABLE 2

Caste Name	Traditional calling	Number of Adult Men				
		total	Following traditional-callings			Not following traditional callings at all
			Exclusively	Primarily	Subsidiarily	
Khati	Cultivator	122	113	—	—	9
Rajput	Warrior-Cultivator	32	26	—	—	6
Mali	Cultivator-Gardener	19	19	—	—	—
Malwi-Balai	Weaver	18	—	—	—	18
Bhambi	Weaver	11	—	—	—	11
Desha-Chamar	Leather-worker	7	1	3	1	2
Purabi-Thakur	Warrior-Cultivator	5	4	—	—	1
Malwi-Chamar	Skinner-Tanner	3	2	1	—	—
Malwi-Kumhar	Potter	4	2	1	—	1
Guj.-Kumhar	Potter	3	2	1	—	—
Guj.-Lohar	Blacksmith	4	—	4	—	—
Guj.-Balai	Weaver	4	—	—	—	4
Darji	Tailor	2	—	2	—	—
Guj.-Chamar	Skinner-Tanner	1	1	—	—	—
Nai	Barber	5	2	3	—	—
Srigaur-Brahmin	Priest-Astrologer	3	—	3	—	—
Dholi	Drummer	1	1	—	—	—
(Khati)-Bhaat	Bard-Genealogist to Khati caste	1	—	—	1	—
Teli	Oil-presser	1	—	—	—	1
Palliwal-Bania	Shop-keeper	1	—	—	—	1
Bhangi	Scavenger	1	—	1	—	—
Gosain	Mendicant-Temple-priest	1	—	1	—	—
Vairagi-Vaisnava	Temple-priest-Mendicant	3	—	3	—	—
Nath-Jogi	Beggar	13	—	6	7	—
Bargunda	Basket-maker	6	—	6	—	—
Bagri	Mat-maker	9	—	4	3	—
		283	173	40	14	56

altogether given it up for some other occupation. Later, I propose to discuss the cases of non-conformity to traditional-callings and the causes that have brought about such a situation.

On the basis of this data, we can say that most of the caste-groups in Patal village still continue to pursue their respective traditional-callings. The caste-groups that have given up their traditional-callings altogether are: *Malwi-Balai*, *Bhambi*, *Gujerati-Balai*, *Dhobi*, *Teli*, and *Palliwal-Bania*. The (*Khati*)-*Bhaat* follows his occupation only subsidiarily. The caste-groups from which only a few adult men have taken to alternate callings are *Rajput*, *Khati*, *Purabi-Thakur*, *Desh-Chamar*, and *Malwi-Kumhar*.

It will become clear that only those castes have given up their traditional-callings the members of which do not find the latter any more profitable. Such is the case with the *Balai*, *Bhambi*, and *Teli*, and to a certain extent with the *Bhaat* castes.

The demand for the genealogist and bard is on the decline. "He is a costly luxury of ages past", said Ram Chandra Khati. "He charges you for everything: for visiting your house, attending ceremonies, registering births and marriages in his register; and what do you get in exchange! Nothing but stories about your ancestors to satisfy your desire for vanity; he charges you heavily, sometimes as much as fifty rupees for a single visit!" Again his occupation as bard and herald is beginning to be one of the past, in an age when many people can read and write.

The *Balai* and *Bhambi* weavers and *Teli* oilpressers lost their traditional occupation due to the economic and industrial developments in the rural areas. I was told that the weavers used to buy cotton from local cultivators, weave coarse cloth on their hand-looms, and sell it back to the villagers. Similarly with the *Teli*; he bought oil-seeds and sold oil which he had pressed in his wooden mill worked by a pair of oxen. In the twenties of the present century, cotton-textile and oil-pressing industries were established in neighbouring cities (Indore and Ujjain), and cheap mill-made cloth and cleanly and cheaply-pressed oil began to be available in the village markets. As a result, the traditional weavers and oil-pressers found it uneconomical to carry on their traditional-callings and gradually had to give them up altogether. The story of the weavers and oil-pressers serves to bring out some interesting aspects of the effects of industrialization on caste-occupation relationship.

The cases of the *Dhobi* and *Palliwal-Bania* have different explanations. Both these castes are represented in this village by single families, and it would be wrong to make any generalizations on the basis of their behaviour. The *Dhobi* family immigrated and settled in this village about 40 years ago (in or about the year 1915). After a year or so of service as washermen, they found the pursuit of their

traditional-occupation uneconomical. In villages, people wash their garments themselves, and only a few can afford to pay regularly for the services of the washerman. So the *Dhobi* decided to give up laundering clothes, and took up work as a farm-labourer; after a few years, he took some land on lease and cultivated it; during the war-years (1939-45) when the costs of farm-produce became very high, the family accumulated wealth, and in 1946, bought the land they had until then cultivated on lease, thus becoming permanent land-owning cultivators.

The *Palliwal-Bania*, on the other hand, is a poor man who found it difficult to amass sufficient capital for a shop, and then, he told me, there already existed two shops in the village, financed by well-to-do merchants from a neighbouring village. He did not find himself in a position to start a new shop, and preferred to live as a simple cultivator. He is middle-aged, a widower without children, and without any ambitions, and these contribute, I think, to his lack of interest in trade or shopkeeping.

Ideally, members of a caste are expected to stick to their traditional-calling. That, according to Hindu traditions, is the only correct and right way for them to make their living. In practice, however, such factors as the economic unsuitability of the occupation or personal choice of certain individuals result in deviations.

The occupational structure, again, is not so rigid as to disallow any such non-conformities or deviations in respect of traditional-callings. As I hope to show, there are certain "open" occupations, the pursuit of which is permitted to all castes—from the highest Brahmins to the lowest 'untouchables'. Secondly, the traditional rules governing caste-occupation relationship are prohibitive rather than prescriptive, that is, they prohibit a caste from taking to certain callings rather than restrict it to a single trade or occupation. These, I believe, are responsible for the limited occupational mobility of certain caste-groups or some members from other caste-groups in Patal village to take to occupations other than their traditional ones.

In Table 3, I have indicated the occupations actually taken up and followed by those who have abandoned their traditional-calling.

It is necessary for me to point out at this stage—what I regard as a fundamental to any understanding of the occupational role of castes—the fact that the practice of agriculture is largely considered to be 'caste-free'. There are, no doubt, 'cultivator-castes'—*Khati*, *Mali*, *Kulmi*, *Anjana* (the last two are not found in Patal, but are living in neighbouring villages), but agriculture is in no sense a caste-monopoly, and all castes, down to the very lowest untouchables<sup>2</sup> may practise cultivation. That most of them did so even during the days of feudal authority in Malwa is evidenced in the service-tenure requirements of the various artisans and servant castes. A majority

TABLE 3

PART I

Caste Name	Total number of adult men not following traditional- callings	Occupations taken to			
		Cultivation	Farm labouring	General labouring	Shop- keeping
Khati	9	—	—	6	3
Rajput	6	—	6	—	—
Malwi-Balai	18	—	17	1	—
Bhambi	11	—	7	4	—
Purabi-Thakur	1	—	1	—	—
Desha-Chamar	2	—	2	—	—
Malwi-Kumhar	1	1	—	—	—
Gujerati-Balai	4	—	4	—	—
Dhobi	2	2	—	—	—
Teli	1	—	—	1	—
Palliwal-Bania	1	1	—	—	—
	56	4	37	12	3

PART II

Caste Name	Total number of adult men following their traditional- calling only subsidiarily	Occupations now primarily followed			
		Cultivation	Farm labouring	General labouring	Shop- keeping
Desha-Chamar	1	—	1	—	—
(Khati)-Bhaat	1	—	—	1	—
Nath-Jogi	7	—	7	—	—
Bagri	5	—	—	5	—
	14	—	8	6	—

of these non-cultivator-castes—such as priests, artisans, community-servants—practised their caste-vocation in conjunction with agriculture. Usually, land was granted rent-free to them in exchange for specific services they were required to render to the feudal lord. Agriculture may thus be regarded as an 'open' occupation which could be and was pursued by any caste irrespective of its ritual status and position in the caste-hierarchy.

Like the 'formal' caste-hierarchy or hierarchy of castes in respect of commensality, give and take of food and drinks, etc., there is also a hierarchy of occupations.

The following chart shows such a hierarchy of occupations. Only those occupations have been included in this chart that are pursued or professed (as traditional-callings) by the people of Patal village.

PURE	Domestic-Priesthood	Temple-Priesthood	Teaching	Astrology
		Land-owning	Ruling	
	Trading	Shop-keeping	Money-lending	
		Agriculture	Cattle-rearing	
	Tailoring	Black-smithy	Carpentry	Pottery
			Barbering	
	Mendicity (from 'Clean' castes only)			
	Mendicity (from clean and unclean castes)			
IMPURE	Drumming	Oil-pressing	Cloth-weaving	
			Basket-making	
			Mat-Weaving	
	Laundering soiled garments			
VERY IMPURE	Skinning and Tanning		Leather-work	
	Scavenging			

At the top of this hierarchy of occupations come what may be called 'white collar' occupations, the type of callings prescribed for the *Brahmin* by the *Varna*-theory. A *Brahmin* should be a domestic-priest or temple-priest or an astrologer, or a teacher and scholar well-versed in religious and cultural lore. All these callings are considered to be the purest, and not involving any occupational-pollution. These are known as *satvik* or ritually-pure-callings (*Satvik* is from the skr. root *sat* meaning 'good, pure').

The second sub-category of occupations are those considered to be suitable for the castes of the middle ranks in the ritual purity scale; these do not involve any definite and voluntary pollution, but also they are not so pure as the *satvik* callings. Administration, justice-giving, and fighting come at the top of this category of occupa-

tions. All of these involve killing, injuring or harming some living beings even though the administrator, judge and warrior are expected to be righteous in their deliberations and stand for a just and humanitarian cause. Even the Brahmin, however, regard these as noble professions, since their purpose is to protect the good and righteous against the sinful and unrighteous.

Trade and shop-keeping come next on the hierarchy of occupations. Both these involve immoral if not positively impure habits and activities. "A *Bania* must necessarily lie, if he wants to prosper" is an oft-quoted proverb. "A shop-keeper", said Ratan Lal Jain, himself a petty shop-keeper, "is usually dirty, having to deal with such things as grains, spices, salt, sugar, jaggery, and oils. Besides, in his business, he has to deal with customers belonging to all castes and ranks and to accept money touched by them."

The next sub-category of occupations consists of the crafts and cultivation, in the economic sense, the 'actual producers of real wealth'. Tailoring, black-smithy, carpentry, and pottery—all these crafts are considered to be lowly though ritually pure callings. The black-smith uses the bellows made of animal-hide and the carpenter and potter kill the insects in the wood and clay they respectively work with. Cultivation of land is considered, by the orthodox, to be un-worthy since the plough or harrow injures the earth (which is treated as Mother; she is popularly referred to as *Dharati-mata*, i.e. mother earth) and the living organism in her bosom.<sup>3</sup>

The barber's occupation comes next. It is considered to be more lowly than the crafts or land cultivation. The former is concerned with human hair which are a form of bodily substance (though not strictly emissions, and hence not polluting); he also massages the limbs of his patrons; so his calling is regarded as lowly though not unclean.<sup>4</sup> To maintain his ritual purity the barber serves only the 'ritually-clean' castes.

Begging is not highly regarded but there is nothing impure about it, but only so long as a person begs from ritually 'clean' persons alone and accepts only 'ritually-clean' things. Hindu religious tradition permits Brahmins and ascetics to beg for living, even if the latter lead a family life and work as cultivators or labourers. But on no account must they accept alms from 'ritually-unclean' castes, and they must not accept impure things as alms. This vitally effects the ritual status of the mendicant or beggar. In Patal village, the *Brahmin*, *Gosain*, and *Vairagi-Vaisnava* beg for alms from 'clean' castes only and accept gifts of grain, uncooked food-stuffs, new cloth or money, and for this reason are considered to be pure and ritually 'clean' themselves. On the other hand, the ascetic *Nath-Jogi* beg for alms from 'clean' and 'unclean' castes (they put the limit at 'untouchable' castes), and are, for this reason, treated as 'ritually unclean'. The

*Bhangi* also begs, but he not only accepts alms from all 'clean' and 'unclean' castes, he also accepts cooked food (including flesh-food) and even leavings from the plates; for this reason (in combination with others), he is assigned a very low place on the hierarchy of occupations. (The *Maha-Brahmin* who accepts funerary gifts is also considered as of low ritual status, because of his acceptance of gifts that have been in association with death).

The drummer's occupation is 'ritually-impure', for it involves him into coming in contact with animal skin (which covers the large drum, called *dhol*); the drummer also works for and begs from all 'clean' and 'unclean' castes.

The oil-presser crushes seeds to extract oil for his living, thus destroying intentionally and directly the life-principle in the oil seeds. The life-principle is regarded as sacred, and for this reason the Teli's occupation is considered to be 'ritually-impure'.<sup>5</sup>

Cloth-weaving is an 'impure' occupation, because the weaver has to use the bow with its string made of animal-tissues.

Much more 'impure' is the work of the washerman who has to handle soiled garments, including clothes worn by people during periods of ritual pollution, such as menstruation, child-birth and death. The washerman, though, does not serve the 'unclean' and 'untouchable' castes.

Basket-weaving and mat-making are 'impure' trades because they involve handling of leaves and stalks of the palm which is believed to be intrinsically impure.

Skinning dead animals and tanning their hides is a 'very impure' calling because it brings the Skinner-tanner into direct physical contact with death and decay. The leather-worker is slightly less impure since he does not skin dead-animals or tan the hides but deals in only tanned leather.

Similarly the scavenger's work is 'very impure' since he has to remove night soil in addition to handling animal-carcasses, castrating calves (thus killing the life-germs of an animal belonging to the extremely sacred cow family), accepting alms and plate-leavings from even 'unclean' castes, and accepting part of a dead person's shroud.

A question we might pose here is: what is the criterion for this grading of occupations? Is it based on the skill involved in the trade, or the economic gain that accrues from its pursuit, or some such secular criteria as power and wealth which the follower of the trade acquires, or do we have to look elsewhere for finding the basis for such a widely-known and accepted hierarchy? The clue to this, I believe, lies in the terms used by the village people of Patal to distinguish the occupations higher up in the hierarchy from those that are at lower levels. For instance, 'domestic priesthood' or 'teaching'

are not referred to as 'more skilful' occupations, nor as occupations that yield wealth to him who pursues them, but rather as 'purer' occupations than the rest. Similarly, occupations on the lower scales of the hierarchy are called 'impure' occupations. The purity or impurity of occupations is determined in terms of the notions about pollution and purity, which, I hope to show elsewhere, govern the conduct and behaviour of common village Hindus in their individual and social life and that of groups in the inter-group behaviour.

There was a general consensus of opinion among my informants from all castes that all work is either pure or impure; the determining factor here is whether the things handled during the course of a job are pure or impure. Human emissions and dead things are considered to be impure all over India, and hence all those jobs that involve handling or contact with these impure things are considered to be impure. Casual or accidental contact with impure things results in temporary pollution such as a person accompanying a dead body to the cremation-ground or a woman in her periods suffer from. Should, however, the contact with impure things become regular and occupational, the occupation itself becomes an impure one, and it imparts its impurity to all those persons who pursue it regularly.

Similarly, there are pure occupations which involve regular professional contact with or handling of pure objects. Priesthood—domestic and temple, or teaching or astrology are considered to be extremely pure callings; land-owning, shop-keeping, tailoring, carpentry and smithy, cattle-rearing, pottery are all pure callings, but some are purer than others. The pursuit of pure callings does not entail any regular and occupational contact with impure things.

Some of the intrinsically impure occupations, I was told, are considered to be very impure. An old Brahmin, Ramanand, gave the distinction between 'impure' and 'very impure' callings in the following words: 'There is a very large number of occupations which involve professional and regular contact with dirt and impurities, and which, for this reason, are treated as 'impure', that is, their pursuit pollutes a person; there are, however, some, where there is greater and more direct handling of impure and polluting objects; the occupations of both the drummer and the Skinner-tanner involve contact with and handling of dead animals' skin; the *Dholi* beats the tom-tom which is covered with animal-skin, and the *Chamar* skins the dead animal and tans the hide; both are impure; since, however, the *Chamar* is called upon to touch the dead animal, skin it, and cure the skin, his occupation is more impure than that of the *Dholi* who merely beats the tom-tom; similarly, the *Dhobi* washes soiled garments including clothes worn by women during their periods and parturition, but the *Bhangi* actually removes by hand human excreta; the latter's occupation is more impure than that of the former.'

In this way, all occupations are thought of by the village-people as arranged in a hierarchy, a definite place being assigned to each. And since this placement is made in terms of the notions of ritual purity and pollution, each occupation may be said to possess a specific 'ritual position'.

I have already shown that each occupation is linked up with one or more castes who pursue it, or profess to pursue it, as their traditional-calling. I have also shown that the position of a caste on the caste-hierarchy is determined by and is indicative of its ritual-status. It may then be said that the ritual-position of an occupation must approximate to the ritual-status of the caste or castes who pursue it as a traditional-calling.

It is but a corollary of the above-said rule that the pursuit of 'pure' occupations is limited to *dwija* or 'clean' castes; these ritually clean castes alone are entitled, broadly speaking, to follow the pure trades as their regular occupations. Similarly, only the *antyaja* or 'unclean' castes may follow the 'impure' trades as their traditional-callings. For the same reason, the 'very impure' trades and jobs are assigned to castes which are considered to be 'ritually-untouchable' or *avarna*.

Restated so as to appear as a ritual prohibition, this rule would mean that 'ritually clean' castes are prohibited from taking to 'impure' or 'very impure' callings; 'ritually-unclean' castes are forbidden to follow both the 'pure' and the 'very impure' callings; and castes that are considered to be 'ritually untouchable' must not pursue callings or trades which are 'pure' or 'impure'.

There appear to be two different aspects of this 'impurity' or 'purity' of occupations. The first I have stated above. This can be viewed at a glance in the following chart :

INTRINSIC WORTH OF OCCUPATIONS	'RITUAL PURITY DIVISION' OF CASTES WHO CAN FOLLOW THESE AS TRADITIONAL-CALLINGS
'Pure'	'Ritually Clean', i.e. <i>Dwija</i> castes
'Impure'	'Ritually Unclean', i.e. <i>Shudra</i> castes
'Very Impure'	'Ritually Untouchable', i.e. <i>Avarna</i> or <i>Chandala</i> castes

The important exceptions to this general rule are in respect of 'and-cultivation and cattle-rearing. No doubt there are castes whose

traditional-callings are cultivation or cattle-rearing (such as *Khati*, and *Mali* castes). Both these, however, are considered to be unspecialised and 'open' callings, and all castes, irrespective of the nature of their traditional-callings, can own land and cattle, or take land on lease or rent, or cultivate land and rear cattle. (see Ghurye, 1950, p. 16; Srinivas, 1955, p. 3)

Secondly, occupations are relatively 'normal', 'too pure' or 'too impure' for different castes, and this aspect is applicable on a much narrower level than the above mentioned concept of intrinsic ritual worth of occupations does. We have seen that most of the occupations are caste-linked, that is, they are suitable or 'normal' for particular castes, and unsuitable or 'not-normal' for all others. For some castes, thus, the same occupation is 'normal', that is, the ritual status of the caste approximates to the ritual worth of occupation, for some others, it would be 'abnormal' or 'too pure'; for still others, the same occupation might be 'sub-normal' or 'too impure'.

I shall demonstrate this by taking a single occupation and examining its ritual value for the different castes. For this purpose I shall take a 'craft' occupation—pure, though not very pure in its nature. Blacksmithy as an occupation is 'normal' or suitable for the *Lohar* or 'blacksmith' caste; it is this caste's traditional-calling, and all members of the *Lohar* caste are required to be black-smiths. But this occupation is also 'normal' or suitable for other castes whose ritual-status and traditional-callings are of the same ritual-order, such as *Sutar* (carpenter), *Darji* (tailor) or *Kumhar* (potter). Thus, no harm (from the ritual view-point) will come to a *Sutar*-blacksmith, *Darji*-blacksmith, or *Kumhar*-blacksmith, and such a person would continue to enjoy his normal-ritual-status and all the privileges and obligations connected with that. There are, however, other castes for whom blacksmithy would be an unsuitable, that is, ritually 'not normal', calling. Such, for instance, would be the case with the *Brahmin* and other non-artisan castes, such as *Rajput*, *Khati* or *Vairagi-Vaisnava*, all of the 'ritually-clean' category of castes. From their point of view, black-smithy, though intrinsically 'pure', is a relatively 'impure' calling, the pursuit of which would lower their ritual status and mean the loss of caste. For the *Nai* (whose occupation itself is intrinsically pure), however, black-smithy is a relatively 'purer' calling which he cannot take to, again without fear of loss of ritual-status and caste.

With castes whose traditional-callings are intrinsically 'impure' the inter-occupational mobility is still more restricted. In this category, each caste regards its traditional-calling as superior to the traditional-callings of other castes of the same category. The *Teli*, for example, thinks that his traditional-calling of oil-pressing is relatively purer than those of the *Bhambi*, *Dholi*, *Dhobi*, *Bagri* or *Bargunda*; the *Bhambi* thinks his is the purest of all 'impure' callings, and so on.

Decidedly all castes of this category regard their traditional-callings as intrinsically 'purer' than those of the castes of the 'ritually-untouchable' division whose traditional-callings are intrinsically 'very impure' (so impure as to render the castes that pursue them ritually 'untouchable'). This is taken to be so by all the castes of the village.

Within their own class, however (i.e., castes belonging to the 'too impure' occupation-category), each caste considers its calling as relatively 'purer' compared to that of the others of this class. Thus, for instance, a *Bhangi* would not change his traditional-calling with that of the *Chamar* for all material gains. In his own turn, the *Chamar* would treat scavenging as a relatively-impure calling which he would not take up for anything.

The ideal pattern of inter-occupational mobility of castes as conceived by the people of Patal village is shown in the chart on the following page.

In an orthodox community like Patal village, castes are normally expected to follow their respective traditional-callings, or, in exceptional cases, the alternate occupations approved in their ritual idiom. *Dharma* (that is, rules for righteous conduct and living) requires members of a caste to stick to their caste's traditional or hereditary calling or callings. To abandon this in pursuit of another, though the latter might be more lucrative and materially gainful, is thought to be un-right and not proper. Even if, however, people do give up their traditional-callings and take up others as their means of living, this has to be strictly within the ritual purity framework which has already been elaborated.

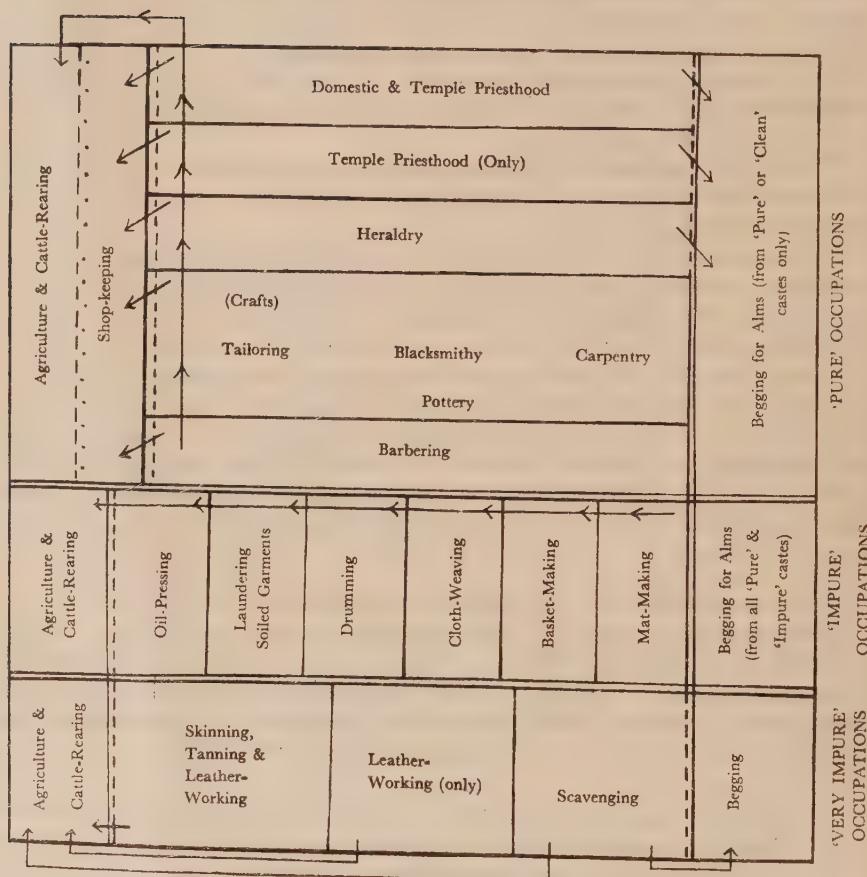
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This paper is based on field-research carried on by the author in a village in Malwa (Madhya Pradesh, India) in 1955-56. It was made possible by a Research Scholarship of the Australian National University, Canberra, and the author wishes to acknowledge the facilities made available to him by the University authorities.

1. 'Patal' is a pseudonym.
2. There is traditional and scriptural sanction for such practice. See *Sukraniti*, quoted by Ghurye (1950), p. 102.
3. For this reason, every orthodox Brahmin does not cultivate land. If he owns land, he either gives it on lease to tenant-farmers, or he employs servants to till the land, thus shifting the sin which is believed to fall on the tiller of the soil.
4. In some parts of India, the barber's calling is considered to be impure and his touch polluting (e.g., Srinivas, 1952) and a person is required to bathe after a shave or hair-cut. Not all castes do even that. (Srinivas, 1955, p. 22) But the very

fact that everywhere the barber is allowed to shave or massage even the highest caste-men indicates that though lowly, his calling is not considered to be 'ritually-unclean'.

CHART SHOWING THE IDEAL PATTERN OF INTER-OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY



Legend :



No Mobility possible



Only One-way Mobility possible  
(indicated by arrow in the Chart)



Both-ways Mobility possible

•PURE OCCUPATIONS

•IMPURE OCCUPATIONS

•VERY IMPURE OCCUPATIONS

5. A very interesting, and I think important variation in respect of the Teli has been reported by Dr. A. C. Mayer who worked in the same region at about the same time as I did. Mayer writes : "Oil-pressing is regarded as a somewhat demeaning work, being messy though not actively polluting; its exponents would be placed roughly equal to barber and potter". (1956, p. 128) Is the variation merely local? I think not.

I put this to some of my informants at a group-interview, and from the discussion that ensued, I could analyse that the variation might be due to the fact that both the oil-presser and the oil-seller are designated by the same Hindi term, viz., *Teli*. Now, oil-selling is considered to be ritually somewhat different from oil-pressing. The oil-seller does not kill the life-principle in the seeds which the oil-presser does. Thus, whereas oil-pressing is considered to be a 'ritually-impure' calling and the oil-pressing *Teli* an 'unclean' caste, the oil-selling *Teli* is treated as a 'clean' caste, even though lowly and dirty.

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## RESEARCH NEWS AND VIEWS

"The 'Eskimo ULU' In the Malayan Neolithic" by Dr. Prince John Loewenstein published in *Man, A Monthly Record of Anthropological Science*, March 1958, Vol. LVIII, is an interesting article in which the author has traced the parallels of a type of semilunar or quasi-rectangular stone blades, pierced with holes, which are said to belong to the late Malayan Neolithic phase. Stone implements of this type have a wide range of distribution in different parts of Asia, especially in neolithic sites of Northern China, Eastern Mongolia, Southern Manchuria, Formosa and Japan, as well as in prehistoric Indian and Eskimo settlements of the New World.

This type of knife was fixed to a handle made of wood or ivory, and can be traced back to the earliest period of Eskimo culture in St. Lawrence Island, Alaska. As woman's knife or *ulu*, this tool is still in common use for scraping hides among the Eskimos of north-eastern Siberia and in North America. The author opines that the centre of origin of these implements undoubtedly be sought in the Lake Baikal Neolithic of Southern Siberia, which has yielded similar types of implements.

The author also suggests that the occurrence of semilunar and rectangular stone knives of Mongolian type in the late Malayan Neolithic phase and the survival of iron examples of such knives in South East Asia further support those ancient Mongoloid migrations, evidence for which has already been put forward by physical anthropologists.

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In an article, "Ischial Callosities as Sleeping Adaptation," in the June, 1957, issue of the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (Vol. 15 N. S., No. 2), S.L. Washburn has presented his theory on the function of the ischial callosities, based on the observations made by the author while watching the behaviour of free-ranging baboons in game reserves in Southern Rhodesia. This article is part of a series on the origin of human behaviour written by the author for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences.

Presence of ischial callosities in the Old World monkeys have been observed by various authors, as an adaptation which enable the monkeys to sleep in a sitting position, but this sleeping sitting habit was also observed by Washburn in wild baboons. On the basis of this particular kind of sitting the author related it to the presence of callosities in the baboons. Washburn further supports Schultz's views that man had lost callosities, at the time of the pelvic and muscular changes which made upright bipedal locomotion possible. This

leads the author to conclude that probably man's ancestors had callosities.

Finally he suggests that the meaning of structures lies in the associated habits, and the interpretation of evolutionary change is possible when the evaluation of structural complexes in terms of associated behaviour is achieved, since anatomy alone does not offer concrete evidences to decide whether the callosities of chimpanzees are in the process of disappearing or appearing or what the ancestors of man may have been like.

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In *Human Biology* for December, 1957, an article on 'Changes in the Body Volume Accompanying Weight Reduction in College Women' has been published. The data were collected by a graduate student, and it has been presented by M.L. Carns and R.B. Glassow. The purpose of the study was to investigate the over-all loss of body volume and the comparative loss of volume in body segments when the caloric intake is reduced.

For the purpose of the study, ten University women who were not excessively obese and who could afford to lose about 20 pounds in a six-week period on a planned diet, were selected. The total dietary intake per day for each woman ranged from 900-950 calories. For measuring the changes in body mass, the first method used was to take the weight in pounds and in the second, the volume was determined by the water displacement method. The subjects were measured first prior to the controlled diet and then at the end of each week. Each time they were allowed to wear only the standard swimming suit. Six anatomical points for separate segments of the body were marked and the volume was obtained separately.

It was found that the percentage loss in volume is approximately twice that of percentage loss in weight. With an over-all loss in volume, the area of greater loss differs among individuals, and proportionately, the area of greatest deposition of fat tends to lose more. Lastly, after dieting body proportions tend to show a decrease in individual differences in lower extremities and in shoulders and upper extremities; and an increase in individual differences in the trunk.

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A physical survey of the Kadar tribe of Annamalai hills, Kerala, was undertaken during December, 1957, and January 1958, by a team, of anthropologists from Calcutta University. A preliminary note based on this survey by S.S. Sarkar, et. al. was published in *Science and Culture*, Vol. 23, April, 1958, pp. 562-563.

Since 'the Kadar have dispersed far and wide in search of occupation', an easy access to all of them was not possible, and, therefore, their 'present strongholds'—Parambikolam, Kuriarkutty, Ittianai and Orukumbankutty—were visited for the purpose of the study. In all, 80 adults (43 males and 37 females) were taken for anthropometric measurements, 140 hair samples 142 blood samples for A, B, O Blood Groups, and 140 individuals (80 males and 60 females) for finger and palm prints. The authors observe that the 'predominant stature' in both the sexes is 'very short' and the 'Pygmy stature' is noticed in 19.5% of the males and 25% of the females. They are predominantly dolichocephalic, and hyperdolichocephaly is found in about 16%, but also hyperbrachycephaly is noticed in 9.3%. The study of their hair shows that the form of hair is smooth, followed by 'flat wavy' and 'broad wavy'. The authors could find the frizzy hair, in the strict sense of the term, only in two cases, and another individual had such hair only in the frontal region. All 'these three individuals are related as grandmother, mother and son'. The Kadars have an almost equal frequency of O (39.44%) and B (37.32%) blood groups with AB as the lowest (7.04%). The dermatoglyphic study indicates that, as a rule, the frequency of the whorls is the largest and that of the arches, the lowest.

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Whether or not is there differential fertility between different mating types of ABO, MN and Q systems? E. Matsunaga and S. Itoh carried out investigations on the population samples of two mining town areas in Japan, and the paper, 'Blood Groups and Fertility in a Japanese Population', was published in the *Annals of Human Genetics*, Vol. 22, Pt. 2, February, 1958.

The authors find that there is no indication of any selective force with respect to MN and Q mating types while in the classical blood groups there are differences in human fertility between certain mating types.

In ABO mating types two different selective forces have been found—one arising from maternal-foetal incompatibility observed in the differential fertility between compatible and incompatible mating groups, and the other in the differential fertility within certain compatible mating types. In incompatible matings, the frequencies both of abortions per pregnancy and childless couples are essentially higher than those in compatible ones. There is a highly significant reduction in the mean number of living children in the compatible matings, and 'this selection is operating to reduce the gene ratios of A and B to increase the gene ratio of O.' Under the second force the mean numbers of pregnancies as well as of living children in A  $\times$  A

matings are significantly higher than those in A female  $\times$  O male and AB female  $\times$  O male matings. Dividing the compatible matings into two groups the authors find that "the matings in which the father belongs to O group have significantly lower fertility than those matings in which neither parent belongs to O". This second selection opposite the first one compensates the losses of A and B gene eliminated through incompatibility.

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An article, "The Unreliability of Blood Typing Aged Bone," by Frederick P. Thieme and Charlotte M. Otten, published in *Am. Jr. Phys. Anthropol.*, V. 15, no. 3, September 1957, holds promise for the elucidation of historical studies of human population. The whole work is devoted to three sections: Bone Typing, Stain Typing, and the Action of Bacterial Enzymes on Blood Group Antigens.

The authors maintain that the accuracy of bone typing depends upon the amount and chemical integrity of antigenic remains in bone unaffected by bacterial enzymes, and upon the reliability and specificity of indicator tests. Furthermore the inhibition test according to these authors does not prove reliable under some conditions.

The authors also opine that the material like Aleut bone, and mumified tissue typed by Candela ('39) and Boyds ('37) respectively can be utilized with security in historical studies.

Finally the authors suggest that the efficiency of bone typing will be better when an attempt is made in finding the antigen specific indicators, possibly such as paper chromatography or precipitin testing, which will avoid many disadvantages of antibody inhibition.

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## REVIEWS

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INDIA'S CHANGING VILLAGES, BY S. C. DUBE. ROUTLEDGE AND KEGAN PAUL LTD., LONDON. XII+230 pp. (1958)

Dr. Dube's earlier book (*Indian Village*) was reviewed in the columns of this Journal. This book may be taken as a follow up. Dr. Dube introduces the book 'as a product of group research'. The theme is a rural assignment under the auspices of the Cornell Field Station in Western U.P. (It would have been more correct to label it Cornell-Lucknow Field Station as the study of rural life and evaluation in western Uttar Pradesh formed a part of the major research project known as the Cornell-Lucknow Evaluation Project. The head-quarters of the sectional assignment was located in the Department of Anthropology, Lucknow University, and the controversy that arose in connection with the stewardship of the project, is known in India and in the sponsoring country as well. This is, however, by the way.)

The book under review has eight chapters, beginning with 'Planning for Community Development'. The other chapters are 'A Rural Development Project in Action', 'Response to Change', 'Problems of Communication', 'Cultural Factors in Community Development', 'Evaluation and Comment'. All these are topical, and are rich fare. Dr. Dube has done well in focussing attention on problems of rural research and the priority that needs to be figured out. The word 'action' used by the author, in the context of rural research has a definite connotation and one would hesitate to use the same in a descriptive-cum-analytical study. That, however, does not detract from the value of the field study and handling of the field material.

One would wish for more books on rural life and analysis. Of late there has been a spate of rural studies in India, by Indian and foreign scholars and the reviewer feels that these studies which cannot find competent publishers in India, should be subsidised by the administration of our country and printed as soon as possible. The anthologies published by the West Bengal Government, by the Chicago University and by the Ethnographic and Folk Culture Society of U.P. are welcome additions to our literature on rural analysis and interpretation and more of these publications are known to be on the anvil.

Dr. Dube's findings are relevant and must be important to planners and technicians in rural action programmes. He has posed several problems of fundamental importance to rural progress and rehabilitation. Some of these are, 'How many of the innovations promoted

by a development project will outlive it?' 'Is there any evidence of psychological change in the people?' 'Are they acquiring the habit of cooperative action?' 'Do they show a will to undertake responsibility?' 'Is a new leadership capable of carrying forward the work initiated by the projects emerging in the villages?' The answers to these and many other topical questions may not be forthcoming from microcosmic studies of the specialist alone, but must await comparative studies and macrocosmic appraisal. For these, the anthropologists must produce as quick as possible, bench mark studies of intensive first-hand kind. Dube's problems can be answered by further probe into rural life and its problems, by teams of research workers, with adequate knowledge of background information and meticulous objectivity.

Well produced and well got up, the book is welcome from more angles than one. The book will stimulate thinking and further research and appraisal.

*E. T.*

**THE MYTH OF THE CASTE SYSTEM.** BY NARMADESHWAR PRASAD, PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR FROM PATNA, pp. iv + 319. (1958)

This book appears to be a challenging one. There are hundreds of books on the Indian Caste System and there are as many theories about caste as there are authors who have written on the subject. One can cite the story of the proverbial elephant, seen by several blind men, and caste has blinded so many people, that we are all groping in the dark and we know what we feel but not what it is. Prof. Prasad, who is head of the Department of Sociology, Patna University, Patna, Bihar, India, writes, 'the earlier social scientists mostly busied themselves in finding out the causes, origins and evolution of the caste system. Theirs was the 'historical approach', as it is termed now. Their findings and interpretations were mostly based on random selections from historical sources or evidences without any sequence or correlation. The perspective of history, I am afraid, has been generally ignored. This does not mean that they did not achieve anything. In fact, their contribution to casteology was of the highest order. The recent tendency is to study caste in terms of relations, tensions and integration, its social dynamics. This approach is still in its crudest form. I have yet to come across a study which would enlighten me on the depth and dimensions of caste tensions, if there be any. I believe that some serious thinking on research tools and method is most required'. We fully agree with the author but at the same time doubt the immediate possibility of any orientation on the lines indicated by Prof. Prasad. Caste is such an omnibus social institution that no scale or tools of approach have given any big divi-

dend so far and with the dynamics of cultural change in the offing, the task is bound to be more and more difficult. Prof. Prasad has made a relevant point in this study that caste is no longer a subject merely of academic research, it has action implications and caste has shifted its moorings from the field of social philosophy to that of action therapy. The future of the caste system is a concern of the social scientists, of the administrators and the reformers alike and the recognition of this fact will go a long way to provide the argument for further reasearch in 'casteology' as Prof. Prasad chooses to call it.

The book is divided into 12 chapters which cover the entire field of knowledge of caste. The book has done justice to the various facets of caste studies and has presented an informed appraisal of the academic standpoints. What strikes the reviewer most is the courage and boldness the author has shown in breaking idols and stereotypes ; his conclusions are worth careful consideration though his treatment may not be above criticism. The empirical data and statistical analysis of the scales probably would leave gaps to be filled up, his analysis of prejudices may not iron out doubts, his definition of 'classes' may not be acceptable to some. The measuring scales he has used lack precision. They are not even workable. On the other hand, his study of caste changes is informed and fairly objective. His note of caution regarding the use of the concept of 'sanskritization' is relevant and bold but his use of the alternate concept, 'kulinism', is probably more open to question than even 'sanskritization'. A secularisation process has been at work since times immemorial and the nature of this process eludes our grasp and even our understanding. 'Kulinism' is value-oriented and stands as a hall mark of culture. The divorce from the values that produced the configuration of 'kulinism' has undermined social stratification and levelled up or down social barriers and social distance. Sanskritization, on the other hand, is a process, while desanskritization works on the reverse gear. The concepts that social scientists are now anxious to formulate have not been carefully chosen, and this is true not for India alone. The process of conceptualisation must proceed and efforts need be judged on merit. Prof. Prasad has done a valuable service to sociology and allied disciplines by pointing his accusing fingers on our gaps and lacuna, and from this point of view, we welcome his efforts and wish him to continue his labours.

E. T.

CASTE AND THE ECONOMIC FRONTIER: A VILLAGE IN HIGHLAND ORISSA By F. G. BAILEY. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1957, 292 pp., with maps, charts, tables and plates.

Bailey has written an interesting and important book on the economic history of an Indian village community, based on anthropological

field work. The book represents a significant development in Indian anthropology as well as in the broader context of anthropological theory.

In dealing with peasant societies the anthropologist invariably finds himself faced with the important fact that they have a history, and "the now and the present" cannot be studied without reference to the past out of which it has grown. This is precisely what Bailey has done, and in a refreshing manner. He describes present day inter-caste relations in village Bisipara in Phulbani District in Orissa (India). He shows that they are not today what they were at various stages of economic growth in the last hundred years. Economic changes are shown to result from the extension of economic and administrative "frontiers", which process brought the merchant and the administrator into the village. In course of time, relations of production changed leading to a readjustment of power-relations *within* the social structure of the village community. However, some of the new economic and power-relations—as between the untouchables and high caste Hindus—have not been accommodated within the traditional village community structure. The result is the growth of an all-India rural society based on political and economic considerations and not on the traditional considerations of caste and birth.

Prof. Srinivas says, in the Foreword, that this is happening not only in Bisipara, but also elsewhere in India. That is why this reviewer uses the phrase "all-India rural society". This is one of the most important conclusions of the book under review. Incidentally, Bailey shows that Sanskritization without economic and political power does not help a caste in improving its status; indeed nothing, not even Sanskritization and economic power may help an untouchable caste. Prof. Srinivas does not seem to agree with this proposition. Here is an important hypothesis for field workers to test. It should produce interesting results and help in clarifying the concept of Sanskritization.

Another important conclusion of the book, and the manner in which it is arrived at, will arouse wide-spread interest, among anthropologists, economists and administrators alike. It is the reasons which Bailey gives for land alienation by peasants. He points out that fragmentation goes on reducing the size of estates, generation after generation, till a day comes when the holder has to sell it to meet contingent expenditure unforeseen and/or unavoidable, like the expenses on buying a new bullock on the death of the one in use on the land, the expenses on death rites, and a marriage. Once land starts coming out into the market like this, the owner may be said to have entered a downward trend which finally makes of him a landless peasant. There is a freshness in Bailey's approach to this problem generally lacking in literature dealing with rural problems in India.

A few words about Bailey's method. It is essentially analytical, and one of 'model-building'. Many eminent social anthropologists of the day would call this the structural method *par excellence*. It is inevitable that this model-building results in an ideal type which, abstracted from the field situations, ignore many facets of social life and processes in their fullness. The advantage of this method is that it gives the investigator ample scope to study the role a variable plays within a particular social system. However, Bailey's book also highlights the overweening accent on a single factor that can emerge in such a study ; in this case on economic causes. Not that Bailey may not be aware of this ; but one wishes he had said so.

Bailey, we said in the opening sentence, has written an interesting and an important book ; and it is hoped that this review gives the reader an idea of how it is that. Its importance, we may sum up, lies (i) in the conclusions it arrives at about the role of changing relations of production and power-realitions in re-ordering caste relations in an Indian village ; (ii) in the manner of approach to the problem and the presentation of analysis and conclusions ; and (iii) in its relevance in the context of a wider problem of immense interest to social science in general, viz., the variations that follow the extension of the administrative and economic frontiers into village communities based on peasant economies. The book is warmly recommended.

H. G. -

ARCHAEOLOGY FROM THE EARTH, BY SIR MORTIMER WHEELER,  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1954, pp. xii + 221.

Coming as it is from the pen of Sir Mortimer Wheeler, a former Director General of Archaeology in India, the book is of special interest to Indians. Apart from this, Indian archaeologists and prehistorians will feel quite at home while going through the book, because the examples and illustrations are primarily drawn from India. The author belongs to that generation of archaeologists who had 'disproportionate share to the invention and elaboration of basic techniques'. Sir Mortimer had a lion's share in bringing archaeology to the level of a 'science' by 'rough pioneering', as he prefers to call it, in systematising cultures and in preparing a time-table (code) or a grammar of the subject. But he does not see an end to everything in archaeology. The time-table was prepared by him and his contemporaries, it is for the younger generation to have some trains. But they must adhere to the time-table, whether that prepared by Sir Mortimer and others or a modified version of that, if their trains are to run properly.

So the book talks about methodology and techniques in archaeology.

In his own words, Sir Mortimer had touched upon 'the history of archaeological excavations, upon the search of an absolute chronology as the ultimate basis for the ordering and interrelating of our data, upon the stratigraphical method as a contributing procedure, upon the need for long-term planning if we are to secure the systematic advance of knowledge, and latterly upon the very vital questions of publication and publicity'. A little has been said also of the actual technique of digging, of recording etc. He has severely criticised the 'datum line-system' in which 'stratification' of the Indus Valley Civilisation was dominated, not by local observation but by the level of the sea nearly 300 miles away. In his own monumental work in Harappa he has corrected this 'parody of scientific method'. In his excavations Sir Mortimer has shown beyond doubt what a methodical planning can do. We in India, owe a great deal to him for the pioneering work he has done with regard to excavation and appropriate method of dating the cultures of the southern part of our country. The author does not want either only 'horizontal excavation' (the uncovering of the whole or a large part of a specific phase in the occupation of an ancient site in order to reveal fully its layout and function) or 'vertical excavation'—the excavation of a restricted area in depth, with a view to ascertaining the succession of cultures or of phases and so producing a time-scale or culture scale for the site. He wants a happy combination of the two because 'the two procedures are complementary (and) not antagonistic'. For the archaeologists of the present and future generations he will advocate horizontal excavation on an extensive scale.

One thing which clearly floats on the surface in Sir Wheeler's book is his contempt for the archaeological work done in the East. Often does he talk about the supremacy of the Western to Eastern archaeology in general and of the British archaeology in particular. One can come across such statements very frequently that in the average standard of field-archaeology in Great Britain itself during the past half century has been unsurpassed, if approached by that of any other country, or that 'there is no sort of doubt that we in this United Kingdom can supply an initial field-training of a quality unsurpassed in the world' (pp. 212). Without quarreling with Sir Mortimer for these self-glorifying statements we do not think it improper to question as to how many Wheelers there are in Great Britain or even in the whole of the West. Yet we cannot say that nothing is wrong with archaeology in the East. Sir Mortimer's objection is based on quality and not on quantity. It is a challenge to the scientists and archaeologists in the East in general and those in India, in particular. The Archaeological Survey of India is one of the largest archaeological departments in the world and I think we Indians should not take pride in being declared unbeatable for 'downright incompetence'.

Sir Mortimer outright rejects such views as nonsense, that 'Archaeology *per se* is no more than a method and a set of specialised techniques for the gathering of cultural information. The archaeologist as archaeologist, is nothing but a technician'. For him archaeology is a fact-finding discipline which 'adapts and adopts the methods of natural science and unblushingly seeks its aid'. But it is not science alone. Archaeologist is primarily 'a fact-finder', but these facts are material records of human achievement. By that token the archaeologist is also 'a humanist'. The secondary task of an archaeologist, according to Sir Mortimer Wheeler, 'is that of revivifying or humanising his materials with a controlled imagination that inevitably partakes of the qualities of art and even of philosophy'. So great is his zeal to see archaeology as an independent discipline that he disapproves the French distinction between l'archaeologie and la prehistoire and declares that the two words 'archaeologist' and 'antiquary' shall in future be exactly synonymous rooted in a common discipline and striving by the same or closely similar methods to the same end. We agree with Dr. Wheeler that there cannot be difference in technique of excavating prehistoric, ancient or medieval sites. In his own words 'it is not enough to identify layers . . . it is the task of the archaeologist to interpret them'. But it is rarely that we can find a man who is master of all the periods, in other words, who can 'understand the sentence as well as can transliterate it. So there is no harm if we use 'prehistoric' before 'archaeology', if the need be. Sir Mortimer has made a very valuable contribution in reminding the archaeologists that the archaeological excavation is not digging up things; it is digging up people.

In the end we do not hesitate to say that the present book is a truly scientific treatise on methods and techniques in archaeology. It is a 'grammar', a time-table, which all archaeologists, eastern and western, should not forget to refer to. This does not mean that they must accept all which Dr. Wheeler has to say. Max Mallowan has paid glowing tributes to the author of the present book in these words: 'The part played by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in initiating and perfecting many of the scientific techniques appropriate to field archaeology is common knowledge . . . Clean as a surgeon's knife, Sir Mortimer's controlled instruments of excavation, cut into a mound and delicately dissect the complicated succession of laminations which represent the growth, maturity and decay of once civilised organisms.' Without saying anything about the extremely charming style of presentation we conclude that the present book is not the last word on scientific technique in archaeology but it is the first of its kind. It heralds the scientific beginnings of a scientific approach in archaeology as a science.

Gopala Sarana

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